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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

EARLY EXPECTATIONS ABOUT READING WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SHARED BOOK EXPERIENCE

by

EDITH MAY LIDDELL

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

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SPRING, 1988

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Early Expectations About Reading Within the Context of The Shared Book Experience" submitted by Edith May Liddell in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Linda L. Nesbush
(Supervisor)

Kay L. Bisany

Daiyo Sawada

Date. April 20, 1988

To my son Graham

ABSTRACT

This study used the dyadic units of child and teacher, child and parent, within the context of the Shared Book Experience in the home, in the school, and in the connections between home and school to investigate interrelationships between young children's developing constructs of reading and their literacy environments, as the three children were making the transition from home to grade one.

The three grade one children involved in the study were part of the same classroom where the teacher used a whole language approach to reading. The three children were described as successful readers by their teacher.

The study was descriptive in nature. Data were collected in the children's natural environments through the use of structured interviews and audiotapes of Shared Book Experiences, both in the home and in the school. Fieldnotes, diaries, a videotape in the school, the teacher's timetable, samples of the children's writing in the home, all provided additional information about their literacy environments.

It was found that the three children's constructs of reading were dynamic in nature; unique to each child. It was very evident that externally imposed criteria were insufficient to capture all these children knew

about reading. These three successful readers experienced support in various ways at various levels of the ecological environment, from the level of the dyad to the level of the culture. Strong links or connections between home and school seemed to be a very important aspect of the three children's literacy experiences. On all levels of analysis, it was observed that there was a nesting of spontaneous and recursive elements which together seemed to contribute to the three young children's literacy development.

Implications of the study for fostering literacy development in the home and in the school were presented. Then, recommendations for subsequent research were provided. It was suggested that further insights about young children's potential development or competence in reading could be gained through a study of conversation patterns and spontaneous elements in Shared Book Experiences.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Problem

Until recently, beginning reading theory and educational practices were based upon a logical understanding of mature reading and upon established instructional practice. Possibly as a result of the proliferation of research in developmental psychology, in psycholinguistics, and in education, particularly in studies involving early readers, contemporary educators have begun to adopt a more developmental perspective. However, there are gaps in our present understanding, which limit the extent to which theories about development may be integrated into instructional practices.

It is possible that the problem stems from the fact that development has been considered an:

> individual process [while] instruction is a social process, rooted in the interaction between teacher and student.... Reflecting the split between individual and social, most research in the field of reading and writing has concerned itself [with either development or instruction]. (Langer and Applebee, 1986, p. 171)

Perhaps our understanding is limited because we do not fully understand young children's insights into reading process at different stages in their development, in the contexts in which they occur.

Margaret Spencer (1986) maintained that the reason we are still "at the beginning of understanding what children think about reading is because we persist in asking them questions about the adults' view of it" (p. 58). It is very possible that our difficulty in understanding young children's constructs of reading and the nature of the teaching-learning process persists because adults continue to regard reading from a logical-scientific notion of reality. It is only recently the reading community, as part of the larger scientific community, has come to accept the possibility that there is more than one mode of inquiry we could use to study something as complex as reading and teaching and, that young children might view reading and learning differently from adults.

Within the scientific community as a whole, a logical perspective has been the prevailing stance from which to observe this phenomena. Now, however, it is proposed by some researchers that a more intuitive, qualitative, insightful mode of inquiry may contribute to our understanding of reading and give us insights that the logical-scientific mode doesn't. Recently, reading researchers have tended to adopt either a logical-scientific, analytic mode, or a more intuitive, insightful perspective. Yet, the nature of reading seems to be a complex mixture of both ways of knowing.

Moreover, even if one endeavored to study reading from a more insightful perspective, there is a question about whether researchers are really capturing the insightful mode, because to date we haven't explored how deeply an exclusive dependence upon a logical mode has permeated our view of reality. Nevertheless, the most recent descriptions of independent reading represent a shift away from an exclusive dependence on logical-scientific mode of inquiry.

Independent reading may be regarded as a dyadic relation between a reader and an author whose thoughts are represented in a text. When reading is viewed in this way, the reading event may be regarded as "an event occurring at a particular time in a particular environment at a particular moment in the life history of the reader" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 12). Rosenblatt described the relation between elements of the reading event as a transaction, "an on going process in which the elements or factors are ... aspects of a total situation, each conditioned by and conditioning the other" (1978, p. xiii). If one regards reading as a transaction, then the nature of the meaning created as the reader interacts with a text is dependent on the nature of the reader's purpose and experiential background, on the nature of the text, and the relation between these two elements, within specific contexts.

It follows then that reading could be viewed from each of these three stances: from the perspective of the reader, from the perspective of text, which may be referred to as a cultural artifact, or from the perspective of the interaction which is frequently called intersubjectivity.

When reading is considered in terms of the reader, one is concerned mostly with personal meaning, and therefore, the constructs which the reader carries in his mind as he reads would receive very careful consideration. Indeed, Bruner (1986) defined a story as "an instantiation of models we carry in our own minds" (p. 7), where instantiation means "a concrete representation of some abstract idea." (Harris & Hodges, 1981). Different ways of construing a character in narrative, and in fact, in 'real' life, influence the conclusions one reaches about the character (Bruner, p. 39). These successive construings are based on the reader's schematic framework. The ways in which one construes the story influence one's perception of the reading event and thus one's comprehension of the author's intended meaning.

When one focuses on the text, literature may be viewed as a cultural artifact. Here, one is most concerned with shared meaning rather than personal meaning. Great worlds of fiction, and of science, are collections of possible worlds existing not only in the minds of men, but having an existence in an 'objective world' of culture (Bruner, p. 44). Artifacts of culture become a shared reality, a shared meaning. According to Bruner, fictional texts provide a map of possible roles and of possible worlds in which action, thought, and self definition are permissible, or desirable (p. 66).

Bruner also explained that different texts are more or less open to the reader's interpretation in that meanings presented may be more or less explicit. Time may be represented atemporally or in a subjective time frame; space may be portrayed "univocally", in one voice, or "simultaneously through a set of prisms each of which catch some part of [the world] (p. 26). Thus, texts may require either logical or insightful thought, or some combination of the two.

Third, the reader constructs an interpretation of the text based on his background knowledge, his present purposes and thoughts, and the constraints imposed by the text. Intersubjective meaning is the result of the interaction between reader and text. Here one is not exclusively concerned with either the personal or the shared or cultural meaning but rather, one is concerned with the meaning that is formed when the personal and the cultural are nested one within the other. This interaction may best be characterized as a dialogue, a tension and a coming together.

Irwin's (1986) conception of reading takes into account this dialogue between reader and text and also considers the context in which the reading event occurs:

> Comprehension can be seen as the process of using one's own prior experiences and the writer's cues to infer the author's intended meaning. This process varies in ways designed to satisfy the requirements of the total situation in which it is taking place. (Irwin, 1986, p. 9)

Irwin would contend that it is not possible to consider reading unless one also considers the way in which the context is capable of influencing the reader/text interaction.

It is possible to conceive the reading event not only in terms of the relation between reader and text, but also on a different level or plane, in terms of the meaning which is created during this dialogue or transaction. Traditionally, we have viewed written discourse as a cultural artifact and have classified texts either as narrative or exposition. Kent (1984), distinguished narrative and expository texts according to four basic features: person, orientation, time and links. In narrative prose, the person used, is either first or third person; the orientation involves an agent, a time frame is specified, there are chronological links. In expository prose, the person is unspecified, the orientation involves subject matter, a time frame is unspecified, and there are logical links (p. 235).

A text not only has meaning as a cultural artifact, but it also has personal meaning. Rosenblatt (1978), regarded the transaction from the perspective of the reader, and noted that what the reader does within a reading event, determines the nature of what takes place. In efferent reading, she explained, the reader's attention focuses on what will remain after the reading, while in aesthetic reading, the reader's primary concern is what happens during the reading event. In one, the focus is on conscious, reflective abstraction; in the other, the focus is on more intuitive experiencing.

Bruner (1986) postulated that a reading event, or any event, may be approached in one of two modes; that is, reality can be experienced from either a paradigmatic/logico-scientific or narrative perspective. The paradigmatic mode is concerned with certainties in a world of shared meanings, couched in formal, logical theory, that allow us to establish commonalities among experiences, while the narrative mode is concerned with the human acts of intention and imagination that allow us to make experience meaningful.

> There are two modes of cognitive function, two modes of thought, each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality. The two (though complimentary) are

> irreducible to one another. Efforts to reduce one mode to the other or to ignore one at the expense of the other, inevitably fail to capture the diversity of thought. (Bruner, 1986, p. 11)

Both modes contribute to a larger whole, to a deeper, richer meaning than is possible if one mode is ignored.

How are Bruner's and Rosenblatt's views different from the conventional distinction between fact and fiction? On the surface, it is evident that Bruner and Rosenblatt are both regarding the reading event from the perspective of the interaction between reader and text, the transaction, rather than from the perspective of the text alone, even though Rosenblatt tends to look at the transaction as a reader whereas Bruner stands outside himself as a reader in order to have a more complete view of the dialogue.

From either of these perspectives, the black and white distinctions between reader and text, between fact and fiction, become gray; they are very dependent upon the context. The distinctions between inner and outer meaning blur. One should therefore be concerned not only with the nature of interaction between reader and text, but also with the nature of the relationship between two modes of interpreting reality.

A review of reading theory indicates that there is disagreement concerning the nature of reading process and the course of its development. Are these disparities merely surface differences or are they fundamental differences in the way reading actually occurs? Or is it possible to look at reading process from another level of reflection and by looking in this way, see a new order that emerges? One such way of viewing the field is in terms of a dynamic tension between reader and text within the literacy environment. Philosophers have tended to describe this as a subject/object dialectic. In epistemological terms, "object" means "object of knowledge" and "subject" means "knowing subject" (Ferreiro, 1985, p. 217). Traditionally, within a dialectic, tension is created as the two polarities of subject and object, or of man and environment, find themselves in disequilibrium. Internal representations and external reality pull against each other, and at the same time endeavor to achieve a state of equilibrium through interaction with each other. More recently, evidence is accumulating that equilibrium is but one of three possible states of being (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984). A state of equilibrium is ordered, a state near-equilibrium is orderly, while a state far-from-equilibrium is chaotic. It is the chaotic state, far-from-equilibrium, which holds the possibility of re-organization and development.

In philosophical thought, the premise that there exists a basic ontological structure of subject and object is considered to be the foundation of the way man views himself and his world; ontology being the study of the nature of existence and being in the abstract. Tillich (1951) described subject and object as a "highly dialectic structure [which] logically and experientially precedes all other structures. Its analysis should be the first step in every ontological task" (p. 164).

In a dialectic, neither polarity may stand by itself, but may only be defined in terms of the relationship with the other. In the dialectic of man and environment, man is a separate entity from the rest of his environment while at the same time he is part of his world, or nested within it. Therefore, in order to observe a dialectic relationship, it would seem imperative to consider not only the polarities but the nature of the relation between the two. For example, if one only focuses on the interaction, it is possible to neglect the influence either man or the environment exerts on the interaction; to overlook important aspects attributed to either polarity. It would seem essential to consider all three dimensions of the dialectic as separate systems which together comprise an integrated unity.

How is the subject/object dialectic actualized in a reading event? The subject is represented by the reader and the object by the literacy environment. Both reader and literacy environment should be considered as complex, multifaceted systems in their own right. The tension between reader and text within the environment is embodied in the dialogue.

Theoretically, it is possible to place equal emphasis on each aspect of the dialectic. In reality, the tension may be unevenly distributed, depending upon where one stands in relation to the dialectic. In reading research, when the subjective aspects are highlighted, reading may be perceived as thinking. Attention is concentrated on the individual reader. On the other hand, when objective aspects are featured, reading may be perceived as a cultural artifact. The focus is on the literacy environment. When what takes place between subject and object is the centre of attention, reading is viewed intersubjectively.

These three perspectives cannot be synthesized to form one view because they appear to represent different notions about reading. They are not in opposition; rather, they are complimentary ways of dealing with the complex topic of reading from different stances. Each perspective tends to give relatively greater emphasis to various aspects of reading, but together, it is possible that they would provide a more complete picture of the nature of reading.

At this point in time, there may not exist a theoretical model which takes into account relations between different ways of viewing reading and at the same time regards the aspects as distinct. Indeed, such a theoretical model may be impossible as long as the relationship between the two modes of reality are not fully understood. However, it is possible to look at reading from another level, from the level of human development. Within the context of human development, reading becomes one of a number of ways in which human development is manifest - in which meaning is represented. There are, as well, diverse stances from which to view development (Mischel, 1986).

At present, within the social sciences, there is a movement toward regarding the subject/object dialectic in terms of complex interrelationships. The theories of George Herbert Mead (1934), Kurt Lewin (1935), Jean Piaget (Flavell, 1962, Elkind, 1976, Kitchener, 1986), Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1978), George Kelly (1955), Jerome Bruner (1978), and Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) have contributed to this movement. There appears to be general agreement among these authorities that man's constructs of the world are not copied but are constructed as a result of experience in both the physical and the social world.

Prigogine and Stengers, (1984), explained that "Whatever reality may mean, it always corresponds to an active intellectual construction" (p. 55). In a state of equilibrium or near equilibrium, these constructs tend to provide some consistency between what we experience and how we think the world operates.

> "Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templates which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed." (Kelly, 1955, p. 61)

For example, how one perceives one's role as reader would influence how one interacted with a text within one's literacy environment. It is only in a state far-from-equilibrium that there is a possibility of re-organization or restructuring.

From a constructivist perspective, development is characterized by an expanding ability to reflect upon experiences and to set up expectations or anticipations about future events. However, although constructionists like Kelly (1955), Bronfenbrenner (1979), Satir (1972), Becvar and Becvar, (1982) agree that human development is continually adaptive in nature, rather than being complete at the end of the adolescent period, there continues to be different notions about how this development occurs. There appears to be disagreement as to whether order comes from order, where equilibrium is the end-state, or whether order arises out of chaos, where equilibrium is only one of a number of possible states of being-in-becoming (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984). There are differing opinions about the relation between the inner workings of the mind and the outer relations with one's environment as the individual develops and changes. For example, Vygotsky (1978) stated that "all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals" (p. 57) whereas Piaget "did not determine what manner or to what extent" the physical and social environment "affected development; they were accepted as 'givens'." (as cited by Shulman, 1985, p. xviii) Although both Vygotsky and Piaget were concerned with internal and external factors, Vygotsky tended to highlight the environment, while Piaget focused on the child.

If one decides that increasing order evolves from order, or order arises out of chaos, or if one emphasizes or downplays relations with others in development, one would adopt a very different conception of readiness for reading. Historically, traditional readiness theories, based on a logical skills approach to reading, were concerned with external factors and thus the nature of individual development was measured in terms of how closely young children's knowledge of reading approximated externally established standards.

When the relation between inner and outer reality became a factor, there tended to be two different points of view. Proponents of Vygotskian theory would be more concerned with the interaction that enables the child to succeed. On the other hand, Piagetians would be more concerned with the reader and the tasks he is given as he adapts to his literacy environment. It is possible that both perspectives have viable contributions to make.

There is disagreement about the relative role of individual and social needs as one interacts with one's environment. From a philosophical perspective, the dialectic of individualization and participation is an element of the basic subject/object dialectic of man in relation with his environment (Tillich, 1951, p.174). If we apply these notions to reading, we ask the following questions: What is the role of the child and the adult in the development of a reader? What is the nature of the relations between the two? What is the nature of the literacy activities in which child and adult are engaged?

Prigogine and Stengers (1984) explained, "The real lesson to be learned from the principle of complementarity ...consists in emphasizing the wealth of reality, which overflows any single language, any single logical structure" (p. 225). If the various perspectives which a researcher may adopt are considered, it should be possible to better discover what is taking place as the young reader interacts with his literacy environment.

The researcher is a powerful player in the context. The ideal would be for a researcher to place equal emphasis upon each aspect of the subject/object dialectic in order to be impartial when viewing what actually takes place in a reading event. One way of becoming more impartial would be to view the relationship between the reader and his literacy environment from another level which would encompass all three perspectives. It is possible that the theory of human development from an ecological perspective, proposed by Bronfenbrenner, would provide such a framework.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that it is possible to regard man in relation with his environment from the level of the dyad, which he felt was the basis of development. The dyad is a "two-person system" (ibid., p. 5) which has been described by many researchers as the primary social unit, (Winter, 1966; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Trevarthen, 1980).

When the dyad becomes the unit of observation, one is able to view the subject/object dialectic not only as a composition of distinct parts but also as a working unit. Meaningfulness resides in each part of the dyad. Thus, it is possible to account for both self and environment, and the relation between. Relations between variables are not linear, and unidimentional, but rather regarded reciprocally (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 5).

The participants' perceptions of what takes place within a dyad, and among dyads, would have a powerful effect upon the development which takes place. To Bronfenbrenner (1979), "the aspects of the environment that are most powerful in shaping the course of psychological growth are overwhelmingly those that have meaning to the person in a given situation" (p. 22).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) made a distinction between molar and molecular activities to highlight this. Molar activities are characterized by some persistence through time, and are meaningful for the developing person and others in the setting, while molecular activities have only "negligible impact", either because they are fleeting actions, or because they "lack meaning for the participants..." (p. 45). Reading activities would only be significant to development if they had meaning for individual participants.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), dyadic relations are nested within larger systems. Thus, the context in which the dyad operates becomes important to consider. Moreover, relations between contexts become important. Dyads may be seen to interact with dyads within the child's experience, as the child comes to know more about literacy. Bronfenbrenner also postulated that not only individuals and relationships but "dyads can undergo a course of development just like individuals do" (p. 59).

One dyadic activity important to development of reading proficiency is the Shared Book Experience. The value of the Shared Book Experience in early childhood to later literacy development has long been recognized. In 1908, Huey stated that "the secret of it all lies in the parents' reading aloud to and with the child" (p. 332). Seventy-five years later, Teale (1981) concluded:

> Thus correlational results from research and practical experience strongly suggest that reading to a child can be the most important facet of his or her becoming literate and even of overall early childhood development (p. 902).

It is possible that using the context of the Shared Book Experience as a reference point, one may be able to study young children's concepts of themselves as reading from a more realistic perspective than has formerly been the case.

Rigorous debate that forces either/or decisions about the nature of reading may cloud the issue rather than clarify it. Bruner (1986) discussed the possibility that one can interact with and interpret a given situation in various ways simultaneously (p. 5). It should be possible to analyze the data collected in this study from the perspective of the dyad, where subjective elements, objective elements, and relations between are all taken into consideration. It should also be possible to regard inconsistencies in perspectives about reading as complementary aspects of the total situation. Information in the reading literature, together with information collected from this present research could then be used to present a clearer picture of what takes place as young children are in the process of becoming independent readers. The complementary ways of viewing reality introduced in Chapter One will be discussed more fully in Chapter Two.

Significance of the Study

The importance of literacy to all individuals in all walks of life in our society is undisputed. The "failure" of some individuals to become independent readers in our school systems limits the roles which they may play in society, affects their relations with others as they go through life, and unfortunately can have a detrimental effect on their self concepts. The role of every teacher and parent should be to encourage and guide children as they grow toward independent reading, while respecting their previous experiences and allowing them room to organize themselves. The goal of beginning reading researchers should be to provide the teacher with information as to how this may be accomplished. The role of the educational system and the community of researchers should be to support the parent and the teacher in this endeavor.

Holdaway (1979) felt:

> It is time...that we concerned ourselves more seriously with the processes by which literacy is actually learned rather than with arid argument and research about competing methods of teaching. Our first responsibility is to observe with proper humility and open-mindedness how children making healthy development in literacy actually operate, and to what extent basic insights about learning apply to the acquisition of language and literacy. (p. 17)

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to explore relationships between children's developing constructs of themselves as readers and their literacy environments, in the home and in the school, as the children are in the process of becoming independent readers. Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are three successful grade one children's expressed and demonstrated constructs of themselves as readers, in December of first grade?

2. What are the dynamics of the interrelationships among the three children's views of themselves as readers and their literacy environments, as indicated during interviews and shared book experiences?

    a. How consistent are these three children's concepts of the reading process and purposes for reading with those of their parents and their first grade teacher?

    b. What is the nature of the communication during shared book experiences in the home and in the school?

    c. What types of links exist between the home and the school that foster literacy learning?

3. Do similar patterns emerge within and among the three children's literacy systems?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, definitions of the following terms were adapted.

Role - a set of expectations about how a reader and learner in specific literacy contexts interacts with others and with texts, but also how others interact with that person; the expectations developing through negotiation between the individual's own construction system and specific literacy contexts, which are embedded within the larger culture (Kelly, 1955; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bruner, 1986).

Relation - A relation exists whenever one person in a setting pays attention to or participates in the activities of another (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Molar Activity - A molar activity is an ongoing behavior possessing a momentum of its own and perceived as having meaning or intent by the participants in the setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Microsystem - the actual settings in which the individual lives, works, and plays. For example, the home or the school (Kopp and Krakow, 1982).

Mesosystem - the network of interrelationships of two or more settings in which the child participates (Kopp and Krakow, 1982).

Exosystems - refer to situations that have a bearing on the child's development but in which the child does not have a direct role (Kopp and Krakow, 1982).

Macrosystem - refers to the ideologies, belief systems, mores, of the society or culture in which the child lives (Kopp and Krakow, 1982).

Scaffolding - the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some task, so that the child can concentrate on the aspects of reading process which he is in the process of acquiring (Snow, 1983).

Zone of Proximal Development - the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978).

Cognition - knowing; specifically, the process, the result, of recognizing, conceiving, and reasoning (Harris and Hodges, 1981).

Metacognition - deliberate, conscious control of one's own actions. In reading, this would include knowledge of oneself as a reader, the demands of reading tasks, and the strategies one can employ in a reading activity (Brown, 1984 & Palinscar and Ransom, 1988).

Limitations of the Study

Generalizations from the results of this study are limited due to the size of the sample. However, an in-depth study of the literacy experiences of three children, which acknowledges the complexity of the situation, would provide more insight into beginning reading. The idiosyncratic nature of development makes even generalizations from a larger sample difficult.

The study did not deal directly with nonverbal interactions. Although a study of nonverbal behavior could have contributed to research findings, it was thought that observations or videos in the home would destroy the ecological validity of the research. Instead, some of the subjects' nonverbal behavior was discussed in the structured interviews.

The focus of the research was not on conversation patterns in Shared Book Experiences. Conversations were used as a context from which to study children's constructs of reading. Another study could be concerned with explanations of conversation patterns.

Organization of the Thesis

This study is reported according to the following plan. Chapter One outlines the purpose and significance of the problem. Chapter Two, through a review of the literature and related research, provides a framework from which to view the data. Chapter Three outlines the research design and includes a description of research techniques and procedures. Chapter Four presents the data analysis. Chapter Five summarizes the research, discusses implications for further research and applications of the present research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chapter Two is divided into three sections. Section One, Reading as Thinking, begins with a discussion of the nature of development and is followed by a discussion of learning and reading from a constructivist perspective. Then, research concerning children's constructs of themselves as readers is described. Section Two, Reading as a Cultural Artifact, is concerned with literacy environments from an ecological perspective and particularly with the Shared Book Experience. The section begins with a discussion of the home and school microsystems and the mesosystem. This is followed by a description of the exosystem and the macrosystem. A discussion of language as a cultural artifact completes the section. Section Three, Reading as Intersubjectivity, is concerned with oral and written communication. This section ends with a description of research concerning early interactions between children and parents.

Reading as Thinking

Reading as Thinking is concerned with cognition or knowing; with subjective elements of the basic dialectic of individual in relation with the environment. In this section, the individual is considered to be actively involved in constructing his relationships with his environment and thus there is potential for continual development or change.

The Zone of Proximal Development

> We believe that child development is a complex dialectical process characterized by periodicity, unevenness in the development of different functions, metamorphosis or qualitative transformation of one form into another, intertwining of external and internal factors, and adaptive processes which overcome impediments that the child encounters. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 73)

Child development, to Vygotsky, is neither smooth nor linear in nature. From time to time, the child experiences "turning points" or "spasmodic and revolutionary changes" (p. 73) which influence the course of future development. Prigogine and Stengers (1984) labelled these revolutionary turning points, "bifurcation points".

According to Prigogine and Stengers, negative feedback loops are stabilizing forces, tending to push the system toward equilibrium and to retain the system in this state. On the other hand, positive feedback loops, fluctuations, or perturbations, are destabilizing forces, disturbing equilibrium, and pushing the system toward chaos and possibly new order. Toffler explained:

> At times, a single fluctuation or a combination of them may become so powerful, as a result of positive feedback, that it shatters the preexisting organization. At this revolutionary moment [Prigogine and Stengers call it a "bifurcation point"] ... it is inherently impossible to determine in advance which direction change will take:

> whether the system will disintegrate into "chaos" or leap to a new, more differentiated, higher level of 'order' or organization, which they call a "dissipative structure." (Toffler, as cited in Prigogine and Stengers, 1984 p. xv)

There is an element of surprise or spontaneity in development or change. "We can never determine when the next bifurcation will arise" (p. xxvi). Moreover, change is irreversible. Thus, the nature of development cannot be parcelled into neat stages nor can its course be predetermined.

Vygotsky (1978), like Mead (1934), Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Bruner (1986) emphasized that "there are highly complex dynamic relations between developmental and learning processes" (p. 91) "from the child's very first day of life" (p.84). Vygotsky observed that there is a difference in the level of functioning which a child can attain on his own and which he can attain with the mediation of more experienced learners. He felt that "what children can do with the assistance of others might be in some sense even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone" (p. 85).

> We call [this] the zone of proximal development. It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (p. 86)

Actual development, Vygotsky defined as "the level of development of a child's mental functions that has been established as a result of certain already completed developmental cycles". When one focuses on actual development, becoming is observed retrospectively. Proximal development, on the other hand, as it is observed in the interaction between child and significant other, is an indication of the young child's immediate potential. Development is thereby characterized prospectively (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87).

Within the Zone of Proximal Development, (ZPD), teaching/ learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are only able to operate during relations with others. According to Vygotsky (1978), "internal speech and reflective thought arise from the interactions between the child and persons in her environment." (p. 90) Thus, Vygotsky maintained, "the only good learning is that which is in advance of development" (p. 89).

Bruner (1986) based his studies of infant development on Vygotsky's theories. He was puzzled about a contradiction in Vygotsky's description of the ZPD:

> On the one hand, consciousness and control can come only after the child has already got a function well and spontaneously mastered. So how could this 'good learning' be achieved in advance of spontaneous development since, as it were, the child's unmasterly reaction to a task would be bound initially to be unconscious and unreflective? How can the

> competent adult 'lend' consciousness to a child who does not 'have' it on his own? (p. 74)

Bruner found that the adult supported the child, at first being "consciousness for two" (p. 75) and gradually relinquishing support as the child became more competent. He labelled this phenomenon "scaffolding". Snow (1983) defined scaffolding as

> ...the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some task, so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill he is in the process of acquiring. (p. 170)

Thus, it seems that a concern with potential as opposed to actualized development, would necessitate a consideration of the milieu in which the developing individual lives and grows. How the environment supports the child, and particularly the nature of the communication between the individual and significant others, would be a central concern.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), it is necessary to place a problem within a developmental perspective and then relate observations in the most immediate settings to the larger settings in which the event takes place. Development, to Bronfenbrenner, is dependent upon complex interrelationships between the person and the environment. Bronfenbrenner highlighted three features of his approach to development, which he described as an "ecological perspective." First, the developing person is viewed from a constructivist viewpoint, "a growing, dynamic entity that progressively moves into and restructures the milieu in which it resides." Second, there is a reciprocal relationship between the person and his environment, "since the environment also exerts its influence." Third, human development is influenced not only by the immediate environment within which the person resides, but is "affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded" (p. 21).

Bronfenbrenner explained that the child's development may be conceived to exist within and be propelled along by his environment which is also in a state of transformation. Bronfenbrenner pictured the two forces of individual development and the environment as "trajectories, one embedded within the other." (p. 265) The use of the term trajectories is unfortunate as it implies arbitrarily imposed initial states. Unlike Bronfenbrenner, Prigogine and Stengers (1984) would probably describe the two forces together as an arrow in time, each influencing the growth of the other in an unpredictable, irreversible manner. From this perspective, the two forces of individual development and environmental change may be visualized together as a system within which complex, reciprocal interactions would occur that could result in reorganization or reconstruction. This reconstruction would in turn become the basis for further growth and change.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), interrelationships between the individual and the environment involve the roles, relations and activities of the developing individual and of others with whom the individual directly or indirectly interacts. He proposed a research model based on an ecological approach to human development. In this model, development was defined as

> ...the person's evolving conception of the ecological environment, and his relation to it, as well as the person's growing capacity to discover, sustain, and alter its properties. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 9)

Bronfenbrenner emphasized that "what matters for behavior and development is the environment as it is perceived rather than as it may exist in 'objective' reality," (p. 4). Thus, a study of the ways in which a young child perceives or constructs the nature of reading before he becomes an independent reader would be an important means of moving toward a more complete understanding of the child's reading behaviors in these early stages. Such a question is concerned with potential as opposed to actualized development.

Constructivism and The Reader

Kelly (1955), like Bronfenbrenner, saw the environment as dynamic, "the universe is continually changing with respect to itself" (p. 7). Unlike Piaget (as cited in Flavell, 1965), however, Kelly tended to focus on subjective aspects, downplaying the reciprocity which Bronfenbrenner considered so important.

Kelly (1955), Piaget (as cited in Flavell, 1965), and Kuhn (1962), all described an organizational unit, an interpretive framework by which man "actively orders his own coherent conception of reality" (Nystrand, 1977). While Kelly labelled the unit "construct", Piaget termed it "schema", and Kuhn called it, "paradigm". Although all three kinds of organizational unit represent a constructivist viewpoint, they are distinctive in that the personal construct is concerned with particular, idiosyncratic development, while the schema deals with the development of universal cognitive structures; and the paradigm is connected with the development of common knowledge of scientific communities, of man in society. (Nystrand, 1977, p.5)

Kelly was concerned with individuals, while Piaget was concerned with an abstract representative figure, the epistemic individual, and Kuhn was concerned with scientific communities. The three writers each saw the unit differently, because they had a different purpose in identifying the unit. They were concerned with different levels of reality.

When one is concerned with individual readers, it would seem that Kelly's theories hold the most potential as a framework from which to view young children's constructs of reading. According to Kelly (1955), an individual's constructs, or "representations of the universe," (p. 12) are comprised of subordinate and suprordinate relationships, but they do not correspond completely to reality; each person actively constructs his own reality.

Although similar to Piaget and Kuhn, the dynamic nature of Kelly's description of change is more compatible with the theories of Vygotsky (1978) and Prigogine and Stengers (1984). Kelly explained that constructs are in a constant state of flux and that man has the creative capacity to place alternative constructs upon reality. However, even though a person's thinking is fluid, it is channeled through these constructs by the way he anticipates events. This "creative capacity" would seem to be very important in becoming a skilled reader.

Individuals anticipate the roles which they play in specific contexts. To Kelly (1955), a role is a "pattern of behavior emerging from the person's own construction system rather than primarily out of social circumstances." This role is dependent upon participation with others. A role is "carried out in relation to and with a measure of understanding of other people with whom the individual interacts." (p. 98) However, the understanding need not be reciprocated. In this sense, a role is neither sociological nor stimulus-response; it is more dependent upon the individual's own construction than on social circumstances. According to Kelly, one can play a role within a specific context without even waiting for signals from the environnment (p. 98). Thus, to Kelly, roles are recursive to the individual as opposed to society.

While Kelly was more concerned with the individual's perceptions of roles, Bronfenbrenner defined roles as "expectations about how a person in a given social position is to act toward others but also how others are to act toward that person" (p. 85). He saw roles in the immediate environment as being embedded in the larger context which:

> ...gives them their special power to influence-and even compel-how a person behaves in a given situation, the activities she engages in, and the relations that become established between that person and others present in the setting. (p. 86)

It can be seen in the above quotation that Bronfenbrenner emphasized the power of society in influencing an individual's behavior. He emphasized that:

> Roles have a magiclike power to alter how a person is treated, how she acts, what she does

> and thereby even what she thinks and feels. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 6)

Bronfenbrenner described a role as "a set of activities and relations [with the environment] (p. 85). When an individual is involved in an "ecological transition", for example, when a young child begins grade one, Bronfenbrenner explained that the child's roles, relations and activities tend to undergo changes. How then may reading development be regarded when one considers environmental changes as well as changes which occur within the developing individual?

According to Kelly, "that which is outside the range of convenience of the construct is not considered part of the contrasting field but simply an area of irrelevancy" (Kelly, 1955, p. 69). The individual is closed to the discrepancy. On the other hand, an **open system** is one which "exchanges matter or energy with its surroundings" (Caley and Sawada, 1986).

There are degrees of "openness". In interactions with one's environment, an individual may **elaborate:** "choose that one of a pair of alternatives which promises the greater possiblilty of extending our predictive system without endangering it" (Kelly, 1955, p. 508). When an individual becomes aware that his predictions are not an adequate representation of reality, the individual may either ignore the incongruencies or **reconstruct** one's system of channels, or constructs, "changing [his] outlook on some aspect of life", and "the role he envisions for himself through his understanding of others' outlooks" (Kelly, 1955, p. 186-187). He may also endeavor to account for the discrepancy according to his present knowledge (Ferreiro, 1985, p. 227).

Like Kelly, Piaget and Kuhn separately identified two ways in which man interacts with his world (Nystrand, 1977). These "functional relations" are compatible if one considers that each writer was regarding the subject/object dialectic from a different perspective (Nystrand, 1977). While Kelly labelled these relations "elaboration" and "reconstruction", Piaget called them "assimilation" and "accommodation"; and Kuhn termed them "extension" and "replacement".

According to Bruner (1986), surprise, or deviation from pattern, violates presupposition. If what one expects conforms to previous constructs, attention diminishes. However, if there is a discrepancy, the amount of time and input which is necessary to see or recognize an aspect of print or an event described, increases. "The more unexpected the information, the more processing space it takes up" (Bruner, 1986, p. 46). Moreover, "when several processes require monitoring, the attention available for any single process is reduced" (Curtis, 1980, p. 667). A complex skill like reading, for example, involves many processes which could be employed simultaneously (Irwin, 1986). Curtis (1980) hypothesized that when word processing skills become more automatic, comprehension factors become more important because the individual is able to devote more attention to the meaning. Samuels (1974, 1988), would concur.

Mosenthal (1984) explained that reading is both recursive and reflexive. It is possible that recursive elements like sound to print relationships or story structure become more automatic, that is, more skilled, and they support reading, thereby allowing the individual to reflect upon other unanticipated aspects.

Mischel (1986), a pupil of Kelly's, described three types of expectancies that influence performance, or that enable the person to "move from what we know and how we perceive (categorize) events to what we do, from potential behaviors to actual performance in specific situations." (p. 309) They are: behavior-outcome relations, stimulus-outcome relations and self-efficacy expectancies.

> **Behavior outcome expectancies:** concern relations between behavioral alternatives and expected probable outcomes in particular situations, and are based upon past experience with similar situations. The adaptive individual, as he interacts with his environment, identifies new contingencies and reorganizes behavior. In the light of the new expectancies: what should I expect if I act in a certain way?

> **Stimulus-outcome expectancies** may be perceived as signposts in the environment which predict for the person events that are likely to occur. Some expected stimulus-outcome associations reflect the perceiver's idiosyncratic learning history, while many associations are likely to be widely shared by members of the same culture. If I see one thing, what should I expect to see next?
>
> **Self-efficacy expectations** are determined by the person's confidence that he or she can perform a particular behavior. In the tradition of Kelly, the focus is on perceived rather than actual ability to perform behaviors. Am I capable of doing what I think needs to be done? (Mischel, 1986, pp. 310-311; and as discussed in Hergenhahn, 1984, p.240)

It can be seen that each of these expectancies are dependent on present, future and past environmental experiences and also upon the individual's perceptions of his interactions with the environment. Individuals use their constructs for predictions and also to "assess the accuracy of the forecast after the events have occurred" (Kelly, 1955, p. 13). Thus, these three expectancies involve both reflection and prediction.

Garner (as cited in Palinscar and Ransom, 1988) identified three sets of factors that "act and interact in reading".

(a) knowledge of oneself as reader,
(b) the demands of reading tasks, and
(c) the strategies one can employ in reading activity.

These factors may be considered expectations about reading in that they move from potential behaviors to actual performance. At present, we seem to know very little about how young children perceive themselves as reader, how they see demands of the reading tasks and what strategies they want to employ. Palinscar and Ransom (1988) suggested that one could become "informed regarding their students' metacognitive knowledge and strategy use" either by asking the children questions, observing their relations with others, asking children to evaluate different approaches to reading, or by encouraging them to think aloud while completing an activity.

A number of writers have discussed expectations about reading in similar terms. Snow and Goldfield (1983) found indications that beginning readers use the strategy "say in a particular situation what you have heard others in the same situation say", probably because they have a limited basis from which to generate utterances. Social environmental conditions that would foster this strategy, according to Snow and Goldfield, are:

> (a) that situations recur,
> (b) that children can identify a recurrence as an instance of the original situation,
> (c) that particular utterances have been produced during previous utterances often and predictable enough that they are associated with the situation in the child's memory (p. 553).

Snow and Goldfield proposed that reading familiar books would be an ideal context within which this strategy could be exploited.

Smith (1977 p. 386, 1983, p. 204) and Sulzby (1981 p. 39) identified fundamental insights or expectations which they felt were important for beginning readers to understand as they "cross the bridge" from pre-reading to independent reading. The fundamental insights were concerned with meaning and with the relation of spoken to written language. They may be explained in dynamic terms as two expectations which individuals hold about reading.

(1) an expectation that print be meaningful,

(2) an expectation that the word is a stable unit and that there is a relationship between letters and sounds. These expectations are reminiscent of the traditional division in reading pedagogy between comprehension and decoding.

Sartre (1984), Steinbeck (1976) and Simpson (1979) all described how they became aware of both fundamental insights described by Smith and Sulzby. For Sartre and Steinbeck, their observations that print was meaningful for others enabled them to learn the code. The literature indicates a possibility that it is only when children see a relationship between these fundamental insights, described above, that they become independent readers.

For Simpson, who described herself as a dyslexic, print became meaningful for her long after she had learned the code. When she became interested in a novel about young relationships which she could relate to her own life print became meaningful for her. Simpson had acquired the technology, the skill, but she seemed to see reading only as a technology, as something apart from her. It was only when she was able to understand reading as a personally meaningful event, that she felt that she became a reader. Thus, all three writers described themselves as readers when they were able to orchestrate the logico-scientific and the insightful aspects of reading.

Like Sartre (1984), Steinbeck (1976) and Simpson (1979), the children that Sulzby (1981) worked with varied as to which aspect they discovered and used first and how they brought areas together as they learned to read (p. 39). Sulzby observed that the independent reader is able to use the fundamental insights described above, "fairly consistently" (p. 39). It is possible that when the young children were able to see that they could orchestrate aspects of reading, a "bifurcation point" (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984) took place, and they were able to reconstruct the way in which they saw reading events.

An individual's reading self concept is influenced by his experiences (Quandt and Selznick, 1984). Bandura, Adams, and Berger (1977) found that "perceived self-efficacy influences [an individual's] level of performance by enhancing intensity and persistence of effort" (p. 125). He also found that "participant modelling" where supports are gradually withdrawn, allowing subjects to progress toward independence, is the most effective means of improving self efficacy.

In the preceding discussion, it can be seen that reconstruction of expectations about one's environment is necessary for growth or development to occur. In the following sections, a framework through which one may explore young children's perceptions or constructs about reading will be discussed as well as their constructs of themselves as readers at various stages of development. Expectations will be discussed first from the perspective of the reader and secondly from the perspective of the environment.

Children's Constructs of Themselves as Readers

Hiebert (1981) found that research studies concerning young children's general notions of reading could be divided into two categories: those primarily concerned with knowledge of processes, "what is involved in using print", or those dealing with knowledge of purposes, "the uses of print within the environment" (p. 240). Hiebert was most concerned with uses of print which occurred naturally in the home environment.

In studying the home environment in relation with the school, Heath (1980) divided purpose into two categories: use and function. According to Heath, the concept of literacy includes not only "its uses (what individuals can do with literacy skills)", which is comparable to Hiebert's definition, but also "its functions (what literacy can do for individuals)" (p. 123) She found that different subcultures emphasized either use or both use and function, while the school environment emphasized function.

According to Irwin (1986), "Reading strategies are related to purposes and situations" (p. 2). She discussed reading in terms of purposes for reading and the strategies which individuals employ during the reading process; tying both to reading tasks in specific contexts.

The process readers follow, according to Irwin, is related to their reasons for reading a particular passage and also to the context in which the reading event takes place. She defined five categories of reading processes at increasing levels of abstraction from the text: microprocesses, integrative processes, macroprocesses, elaborative processes and metacognitive processes. In **microprocessing**, the reader groups or chunks words and selects what idea units to remember. **Integrative processing** is concerned with understanding the relationships between individual clauses. Microprocessing and integrative processing are data-driven processes because the reader moves from text to meaning of the text.

In macroprocessing, the reader synthesizes and organizes individual idea units into a summary or organized series of related general ideas, while in elaborative processing, the reader makes inferences not necessarily intended by the text although having some relationship to the text. Finally, metacognitive processing is concerned with consciously adjusting one's strategies to control comprehension and long-term recall. Macroprocessing, elaborative processing and metacognitive processing are conceptually-driven processes because the reader moves from his expectations about the print to the text.

Irwin (1986) defined reading purpose in a school setting as "the new behavior the student is to exhibit as a result of reading" (p. 130). This definition is more related to Heath's description of "function" than to Hiebert's definition of "purpose". Irwin's definition is couched in behavioral terms and is written from the perspective of the teacher. Depending on the teacher's objectives, Irwin explained, the purpose could be set by the teacher for the students to follow or the students could set their own purposes. However, it would seem that the situation is more reciprocal in nature. Everyone in the classroom would have his own purpose or reason for engaging in the activity which might or might not match the purposes of those around them.

It is likely that individuals not only view literacy as a means to an end, but also as something which may occupy oneself for sheer enjoyment and/or challenge. Donaldson (1978) provided evidence that young children "possess a fundamental urge to make sense of the world and bring it under deliberate control." (p. 116). It is very possible that young children are intrinsically motivated to engage in literacy activities. Palinscar and Ransom (1988) suggested:

> The beliefs we hold about ourselves as learners and the value we attribute to strategy use influence our motivation to acquire and use strategies. Reciprocally, instruction in the use of strategies can serve to enhance motivation. (p. 785)

The literature reveals a plethora of research concerning what young children think about reading. Conclusions are varied and some even contradict each other. The ambiguity appears to arise from differences in the research designs, the nature of the samples, the variety of terminology used, and different emphases which researchers have placed upon various aspects of reading and upon their conceptions of individual development. Research methods tended either to involve concrete tasks devised by the researcher which sometimes included questions directed to the subjects as they performed the tasks or structured interviews which sometimes included concrete tasks. The structured interviews will be discussed first.

Structured Interviews

Research studies concerning children's constructs of reading that involved structured interviews have varied (a) in the design of the study, that is, in the nature of the sample chosen, the number of questions and the wording of the questions, the setting, and (b) the aspects of reading that were emphasized in research purposes and conclusions.

The samples in the studies reviewed ranged in size from twelve to one thousand six hundred and fifty-five while the age varied from pre-school to grade eight. Some of the studies focused on young children before they began formal instruction in reading (Brumbaugh, 1940; Mason, 1967), some on children in grade one (Weintraub & Denny, 1963, 1966; Clay, 1972; Hayden, 1981; Reid, 1966; Downing, 1969, 1978). Some included a cross section of age levels (Edwards 1958; Myers & Paris, 1978; Johns & Ellis, 1976; Canney & Winograd, 1979); while Reid (1966) questioned the same grade one children on three separate occasions over a space of twelve months.

Most of the samples in the studies reviewed did not separate subjects according to achievement in reading (Weintraub & Denny 1963, 1966; Reid, 1966; Downing, 1978; Myers & Paris, 1978; Johns & Ellis, 1976). However, Canney and Winograd (1979) and Hayden (1981) chose their samples on the basis of high and low achievement in reading, while Edwards'(1958) sample consisted of children who were attending remedial reading classes. No studies reviewed concerned children who were successfully learning to read, exclusively. All studies with the exception of Hayden (1981), who compared the schemata of grade one children and their parents concerning reading, questioned the children apart from significant others.

Interviews were conducted in a neutral setting, unfamiliar to both the researcher and the subject. Some of the studies attempted to make the situation less abstract and more related to the children's developmental levels by using pictures and models (Downing, 1969, 1978), or by asking the students to demonstrate (Reid, 1966; Downing, 1969) or by relating abstract questions to familiar situations (Canney & Winograd, 1979; Hayden, 1981; Huffman, Edwards & Green, 1982).

Of the studies reviewed that utilized structured interviews as the basic research technique, Canney and

Winograd's (1979) questionnaire was one of the most carefully constructed. The fifteen item questionnaire was an improvement over earlier studies which had consisted of three to five questions. The number of questions was increased to avoid a warm-up effect, evident in the earlier studies. The first few questions were presented as a means to relax the student and to affirm that the interviewer was only interested in student ideas, not correct responses (Canney & Winograd, p. 22). In addition to minimizing the warm-up effect, the increase in the number of questions increased the likelihood that a complete and more accurate description of children's understandings of reading would be attained. The last question was, "What would you say reading is?" In order to make the question more relevant to younger children, Canney and Winograd encouraged the children to verbally "suppose you had a friend who had a little brother/sister who was going to start school soon. And that little boy/girl said to you, "My mommy said that when I go to school I will read." The intention of this discussion was to relate an abstract question to a familiar circumstance. However, because the question was hypothetical, and verbalized rather than tied to anything concrete that the children could observe, the young children might or might not be able to relate to the researchers' intentions.

Most of the studies did not consider the environment directly, either in the data collection procedures or the conclusions. Researchers, on the whole, did not seem to consider that the context could influence research results. However, studies alluded to both the home and the school and often generalized to the mesosystem level.

Questions and conclusions from the studies reviewed were concerned with reading as a cultural artifact, reading from the perspective of the reader, and reading as intersubjectivity. Questions about reading as a cultural artifact involved questions about use and function. Questions concerning use of literacy included information about what subjects read (Brumbaugh, 1940; Reid, 1966; Downing, 1969, 1978; Canney & Winograd, 1979). Canney & Winograd also asked subjects how reading fit into individual's lives. Questions about function included the value of reading for subjects (Edwards, 1958; Weintraub & Denny, 1963, 1966; Mason 1967; Canney & Winograd 1979). Subjects were also questioned about what was in books (Downing, 1969), and about how they would evaluate good reading (Edwards, 1958; Downing, 1969, 1978; Canney & Winograd, 1979; Myers & Paris, 1982).

Questions about reading as intersubjectivity involved questions about what subjects did when they read (Johns & Ellis, 1976); questions about learning to read (Weintraub & Denny, 1963, 1966; Johns & Ellis, 1976; Canney & Winograd, 1979); and about reading development (Canney & Winograd, 1979).

Questions about the reader included whether the subjects found or would find reading difficult or easy (Brumbaugh, 1940), if they wanted to learn to read (Weintraub & Denny, 1966), if they could read yet (Reid, 1966; Downing, 1969), if they liked to read (Mason, 1967), and what they liked about reading (Canney & Winograd, 1979).

In addition to the questions listed above, Canney and Winograd (1979) and Johns and Ellis (1976) asked the subjects directly, "What is reading?" Reid (1966), and Downing (1969) asked their subjects a question concerning writing. "Tell me about what you have written." Reid (1966), Mason (1967), Downing (1969) and Canney and Winograd (1979) asked questions about reading models, but only Brumbaugh (1940) touched on interaction with significant others in both the home and school environment. "Who told you that you would read in the first grade?" "You will soon be in the first grade. What do you think you will do there?"

The conclusions reached by all studies were concerned with commonalities among readers. No study was found which focussed on unique relationships among various aspects of individual children's testimonies. It would seem important to study individuals because teachers teach individuals within groups. If one is concerned only with commonalities, one tends to focus on logical relationships. However, people regard reality not only in logical-scientific ways but in insightful ways. When one studies individuals as opposed to groups, there is a greater possibility of capturing a more complete understanding of children's constructs of reading.

Some of the conclusions reached dealt with the question of whether children were concerned with meaning or decoding as they read. (Denny & Weintraub, 1963, 1966; Johns & Ellis, 1976; Myers & Paris, 1978; Canney & Winograd, 1979; Hayden, 1981). All studies concluded that younger subjects emphasized the more observable aspects of reading; the decoding. According to Canney and Winograd, "the higher comprehenders were more aware of the meaning focused features of reading than lower comprehenders at every grade level tested" (p. 32). It is possible that the children identified by Canney and Winograd as emphasizing meaning were relating meaning to print, while the children identified as emphasizing decoding did not yet see a relationship between the two. In other words, they had not orchestrated the two expectations or sources of information. They had not yet put together conceptually driven information; what was meaningful for them, what was inside their heads, and data-driven information; what was outside, what came from the text.

This interpretation would be more consistent with Sulzby's observations (1982), and the testimonies of Sartre (1984), Steinbeck (1976), and Simpson (1979). Perhaps rather than deciding whether young children place more emphasis on decoding or meaning, it might be more beneficial to determine whether children see a relationship between print and meaning and what the nature of that relationship is as they grow toward independence in reading.

Clay (1973) found that 66% of school entrants in New Zealand didn't know that print rather than pictures told the story. In a study by Carr, McCauley, Sperber and Parmelee, (1982), it was noted that "pictures have a faster and more automatic access to their meanings than to their names, but that words have faster and more automatic access to their names than to their meaning" (p. 757). It is possible that pictures are a means of support in reading the print until young children are able to independently access the print. It is possible that young children gradually internalize the visual images of meaning from print.

Other researchers noted that the children in their studies were confused about abstract terms associated with reading. (Reid, 1966; Downing, 1969, 1978). "Young children only have a vague idea of how people read, and they have a particular difficulty in understanding abstract linguistic terminology" (Downing, 1969, p. 224). Downing and Leong (1982) explained that there is a gap between the child's world of meaning and that of the adult, when children first learn to read. They described the children as being in a state of "cognitive confusion" which Prigogine and Stengers (1984) might describe as a far-from-equilibrium state. Downing and Leong felt that if conditions were right the child could gradually close that gap as they learned more about the social use of language as it applies to reading. When the child was no longer confused, Downing and Leong would say that he would be in a state of "cognitive clarity."

Some of the studies included individual's conceptions of their relations with their literacy environments and with significant others in the home and in the school. However, most did not regard the environment as a perturbation for growth; they were not explicitly concerned with the possibility that the individual could both change and be changed by the environment. Studies showed that some children were worried about learning to read (Brumbaugh, 1940; Mason, 1967), or didn't want to learn to read (Weintraub, 1966). Brumbaugh (1940) found that half of the children in her study felt that reading in grade one would be hard because parents or older children told them so, or because they had fears of inadequacy in the new situation. Although not directly stated, self efficacy appeared to be related to environmental experiences and to worries about entering a new setting - the school environment.

Hayden (1981), using Canney and Winograd's questionnaire, compared young children's concepts of reading with their parents. She found that the more proficient readers' concepts of reading more closely resembled an adult model than the less proficient readers, but that all grade one readers possessed a more restricted view of the reading process than their parents. One would expect that more successful readers, those moving toward independence, would have views of reading that more closely resembled adult models.

Canney and Winograd (1979) found that lower comprehenders typically did not read outside school (p.38). These children would have less practice with reading and therefore have less time to master the skill. Samuels (1988) explained that word recognition takes place in two stages, an accuracy stage and an automatic stage. "

> By 'automatic' I mean that the amount of effort or energy required to recognize the word is significantly reduced.... Our goal is to spend as little energy or effort as possible on word recognition so that whatever is left can be spent on the comprehension process. (p. 759)

According to Samuels, automaticity is achieved through extended practice. Children who read outside of school would be at a great advantage.

Huffman, Edwards and Green (1982) found that some children equated what people do when they read with the school environment. "Listen very carefully, and really pay attention" (p. 194). Learning to read seems to be strongly linked formal learning behaviors in the school environment for these children. Huffman, Edwards and Green (1982), also demonstrated that individuals' reading constructs change and become more complete through experience and/or age. The younger children, from ages four to six, "talked about reading and reading strategies as physical and operational activities." (p. 194) To this age of children, the content of reading was self-evident. They felt that "being able to read the words or know the words appears to be synonymous with understanding the meaning" (p. 195). The children in this study seemed to be focusing on readily observable external features of print and processes, or decoding. Comprehension is internal and is not readily observable.

In the studies, it seemed that the ability to reflect on what one has read is developmental in nature. Very few of the children in the Canney and Winograd study explained that reading involved reflective abstraction. Only one lower comprehender, an eighth grade student, and eight of the thirteen higher comprehenders "implied that to read is to think about and beyond what is read." (p. 31) It is possible that this realization becomes conscious later than the fundamental insight that there is a relationship between print and meaning. Huffman, Edwards and Green noted that with increasing age, there was an increasing ability to abstract, expanding understanding of the reading process, and expanding role and increasing power of the reader during the reading event.

Research studies concerning children's constructs of reading which involved structured interviews were varied in their research purposes and in their conclusions. Some studies found that more successful readers were more concerned with meaning, while less successful readers tended to focus on decoding. It was found that young children focussed on pictures before they were aware that print told the story. Other studies found that young children displayed a cognitive confusion about reading, having only a vague idea about purpose and process. Young children's constructs became more complete with age and children demonstrated an increasing ability to abstract from the text. Few studies considered environmental influences. It would seem that a study which tapped young children's constructs of reading in their natural environments would be able to describe interrelationships among these factors.

Structured Tasks

Hiebert (1981) examined patterns and interrelationships in development of print awareness over the preschool years by testing sixty children aged three to five years from a preschool and a daycare centre on two concept of reading measures and on three conventional reading readiness measures. The purpose of Hiebert's study was to learn more about young children's general notions about reading.

In an earlier study, Hiebert had found "that the previous meaning given to words did ... derive from their environmental context rather than from conventional word recognition processes" (p. 241). This is related to the findings of Goldfield and Snow (1982) described earlier and the writings of Donaldson (1978) which both emphasize the importance of context as young children learn about print. In addition to the skills tests, concrete tasks were designed to tap young children's purposes and processes for reading which were concerned with materials that young children should be familiar with in their home environments. The tasks and situations in this present study were concrete in nature, using articles and instances common to a preschool environment: reading and examining books; secret messages; Christmas presents on which name tags were prominently displayed; five verbal stories related to environmental print; using a cardboard town with buildings, streets, signs and little cards as a prop; and a children's game; whose directions played a prominent role.

Hiebert found that different aspects of reading develop together in complex interrelationships, rather than in sequential steps. The manner in which they develop is unique, depending upon the individual. Kelly (1955) emphasized the uniqueness of individual's constructs. However, this uniqueness, Hiebert asserted, does not preclude the existence of general stages of development. It seemed that one could regard reading development from different levels.

Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981), conducted a series of studies designed to explore processes involved in understanding, using and producing written language. The studies involved sixty-eight children, aged three to five years. They asked the children to perform a series of tasks: (a) reading print common to their environments, (b) writing their name and anything else they wished to write, (c) drawing a picture of themselves and signing their name, (d) dictating a language experience story, reading and re-reading it, (e) reading a book, (f) writing and reading a story, and (g) writing and reading a personal letter. They concluded that "literacy is an orchestrated decision embedded in a particular context or situation" (p. 39).

Perhaps because the designs of these studies were more closely related to children's natural environments, both Hiebert and Harste, Burke and Woodward, were able to study interrelationships among factors which seemed to contribute to successful development in reading. They both found that orchestration of factors involved in reading was a very important aspect of the young children's understandings. It is possible that the diversity of conclusions in the other studies is due to the fact that when one studies young children's reading outside of natural contexts, one is unable to understand interrelationships among factors.

Unlike Downing's (1969, 1978) and Reid's (1966) studies, both Hiebert (1981) and Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981) found that children in their studies considered print to be meaningful and they were knowledgeable about the use of print. Again, one wonders about the effects of context on results of studies.

Birnbaum (1982) studied reading and composing behaviors of selected fourth-and seventh-grade students. Children were videotaped in a neutral setting, as they read selections and composed aloud. They were also observed in classes or other school settings. Children volunteered perceptions of reading and writing in the school and in the home settings.

Although the eight readers selected for the study were all described as good readers by their teachers and administrators, differences were found which cut across age groups. Birnbaum observed that some children in junior high school felt reading and writing were personally meaningful while others looked at reading and writing as something imposed by someone else. "The more proficient shared a set of characteristics and behaviors that distinguished them from the less proficient" (p. 255). They felt that reading and writing were personally meaningful. Although Birnbaum did not elaborate, she explained that there were also differences in the attitudes and activities of parents and teachers which were associated with levels of proficiency.

Even though the children in Birnbaum's study were all described as being successful readers and writers, differences noted were that the most successful children found reading and writing personally meaningful and that their parents and teachers seemed to contribute to their success.

In summary, the strength of the structured interviews is that young children were asked directly about reading. However, the questions that children were asked were abstract in nature and there is a possibility that they did not adequately capture what young children had to say. Donaldson (1978) emphasized the importance of familiar contexts to a young children's cognitive functioning. The studies which involved structured tasks were more tied to natural development. However, because children were not asked directly to discuss their expectations about reading, or at least, their comments were not reported, valuable information was missing. Thus, Margaret Spencer's contention that the reason "we are still only at the beginning of understanding what children think about reading is because we persist in asking them questions about the adults' view of it" (1986, p. 58) may be modified. Likely one of the reasons we are still only at the beginning of what children think about reading is because we persist in asking them abstract questions, divorced from familiar contexts and interpret the questions from an adult's view of reading; another reason is that we provide them with concrete tasks and interpret their understandings about reading from our personal constructs of reading without checking our perceptions with them.

Reading as a Cultural Artifact

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the building blocks of specific settings in which young children live and grow are the roles, relations and activities that they experience either directly or indirectly. He described relations and activities as being part of the roles that individuals play. Bruner (1986) explained that the way role in culture is defined within the scientific community is undergoing a transformation. Previously, a more structural, static view of role was adopted, where culture was seen as a set of interconnected rules from which people derive particular behaviors (Bruner, 1986, p. 65). More recently, roles tend to be described as implicit and only semiconnected knowledge of the world from which, through negotiation, people arrive at satisfactory ways of acting in given contexts. When roles are less clearly defined, an individual must be more flexible in interacting with one's environment.

Relations are concerned with interactions among participants. Relations among participants in a social situation comprise regular patterns of behavior among people (Bogden and Biklen, 1982, p. 161). Thus, like roles, they tend to be recursive in nature. Is it possible that certain relations invoke certain roles and vice versa? This question has yet to be answered. Patterns of interrelationships between roles and relations with respect to reading development need to be studied.

Individuals interact with their literacy environments in their relations with others, and in their participation in molar activities. As discussed in Chapter One, molar activities are distinguished from molecular activities in that they are meaningful for the participants, characterized by persistence through time, and they are propelled by a momentum brought about by a tension system between the participants' intentions and the activity itself. Bronfenbrenner (1979) defined a molar activity as

> ...an ongoing behavior possessing a momentum of its own and perceived as having meaning or intent by the participants in the setting. (p. 45)

Molar activities "constitute both the internal mechanics and the external manifestations of psychological growth" (p. 6).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), molar activities vary in "the degree and complexity of the purposes that animate them" (p. 46) along the following dimensions: time perspective, or the extent to which the individual reaches back into the past and forward into the future (p. 46); goal structure, or whether the goal involves a single course of action, or a sequence of steps (p. 46); degree of abstraction from the present situation (p. 47); relations with others (p. 47); and capability of carrying on more than one molar activity at a time (p. 47). According to Bronfenbrenner, "Researchers as yet know very little about the molar activities of children and their caretakers in the actual settings in which people live out their lives" (p. 48).

To Bronfenbrenner, events in the environment are perceived to be in dynamic relation to development (time) and to setting (space). It is important to go beyond the individual to view the individual within the larger context of his natural environment on different interconnected levels.

Within this ecological system, Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified four subsystems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. He likened the relationship among these subsystems to "a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls." (p. 3) A discussion of the four subsystems follows.

The Microsystem and The Mesosystem

The immediate social settings within which a person develops and grows are called **microsystems**:

> A microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced

> by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22).

To Bronfenbrenner, the critical term is experienced, which includes not only objective properties but the way properties are perceived by the person. The home and the school are two examples of microsystems.

From an ecological perspective, the manner in which an individual is affected by relations or links between the various microsystems is considered as important as the child's interactions within each microsystem. According to Bronfenbrenner, literacy development is not only influenced by the immediate environment within which the person resides, but is "affected by relations between these settings in which the immediate settings are embedded," (1979, p. 21). Linkages between microsystems comprise the child's mesosystem.

Literacy Experiences in the Home

Young readers' interactions with more experienced readers are a vitally important aspect of their reading development, in the home as well as in the school. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that molar activities can be carried on in solitude, but they can also "take on a high order of complexity" through relations with other people (p. 47). Smith (1977) felt that two important ways in which insight into literacy can be achieved are being read to or, observing print being responded to (p. 388). Both of Smith's examples seem to imply that the child's literacy environment is being mediated by a more experienced reader.

The home is typically the first setting in which literacy development is fostered. Within the home, there is potential for the young child to gradually begin to learn about reading, not as an abstract entity, but as part of an internal, evolving conception of the ecological environment. Like an individual, a family can be open or closed to environmental influences, near equilibrium with respect to the environment or growing and changing (Becvar & Becvar, 1982). Satir (1972) discussed four key factors which she observed differentiate functional and dysfunctional families: self worth, communication, rules and links to society (p. 3). In functional families, family members seem to view themselves positively. They operate under situations where there is no alienation or lack of connections within the family and between the family and larger social systems.

Parents provided role models as they read in the environment (Manning & Manning, 1984). Their use of space, time and materials indicated the importance of literacy in the home environment (Heath, 1983; Manning & Manning, 1984). Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981), found that "the most salient home factor relating to literacy learning is the "availability and opportunity to engage in written language events" (p. 6). Parents of successful readers helped their children with reading (Manning & Manning, 1984). However, they allowed them time to play alone (Manning & Manning, 1984). They took them to the library (Manning & Manning, 1984). They tended to take their children everywhere with them (Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1981). In the literature, it seemed that the environments were structured in such a way as to support the creation of conditions in which far-from-equilibrium states can occur.

The importance of Shared Book Experiences was evident (Wells, 1983; Manning & Manning, 1984; Hayden, 1985). Parents of High Print Aware children read to their children prior to eighteen months. In the interaction, they noted pleasurable and enjoyable aspects of reading (Hayden, 1985). They allowed their children to "read" along with them. (Hayden, 1985) They linked the content of present reading events with previous experiences. High Print Aware children and Low Print Aware children used similar strategies during Shared Book Experiences, but High Print Aware children used them more frequently (Hayden, 1985). High Print Aware children and their parents related "the here and now of the story to the there and then of their experiences," that is, they elaborated more frequently than low print aware children and their parents (Hayden, p. 175). She found that "caregiver literacy belief systems and communication strategies are intimately related to young children's literacy development" (p. vi). Successful readers read more frequently and therefore practised more. They used strategies more frequently. Their parents elaborated more frequently from the text.

Although the studies cited above offer possible relations between the children's literacy experiences and reading development, they do not quite tap the heart of the relationship between child, literacy environment and development. It is likely that the problem lies in the design of their studies. Each of these studies neglected aspects of the subject/object dialectic as identified in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological approach to psychological development. They offer tantalizing glimpses into the dynamics of what takes place in homes that promote literacy development, but there seem to be gaps in their explanations. The Wells studies were among the most complete in their descriptions, possibly because he recorded the young children's verbal interactions with others in their home environments. However, only the parents were questioned about what took place; the children in the dyadic relationships were not consulted as to their interpretation of events.

Because Wells (1983) failed to access the children's point of view, it is probable that rich insights into the nature of early literacy development were lost. Thomas (1985) and Bissex (1981), also provided insights into early literacy development in natural contexts. Thomas, like Wells, only interviewed the parents; Bissex (1980), on the other hand, described her son Paul's successive approximations as he moved toward independent reading but one only can infer about her role as parent/teacher. Doake's (1981) study of young children's emergent reading behavior also did not consider the role of the adult in the dyadic relationship. Doake (1981) found that as young children were gaining control of the print, they completed sentences when their partner paused in the reading. They mumbled the words in an unconscious manner and deliberately echoed sections as if to gain better control over the print. As stories became more familiar, they read cooperatively with their partner. Although all of these studies provided valuable information about young children in relation with their literacy environment, in all but the Wells studies, information about intersubjective relationships between children and significant others in the home was lacking.

Role of the Parent

It is evident that parents play an active role in their children's literacy development. Thomas (1985) found that parents of early readers interacted with their children in a manner that would be termed exemplary teaching in the school environment. Bronfenbrenner (1979) compared the role of parent in the home and the teacher in the school:

> Both are expected to provide guidance to the young, who in turn are expected to accept such guidance in a relation characterized by high level of reciprocity, mutual affection, and a balance of power in favor of the adult. But with parents the degree of reciprocity and mutual affection is presumed to be higher, and parental authority is thought to extend over a broader segment of the child's life than the teacher's. (p. 85)

Thus, there are both similarities and differences between the roles of teacher and parent. We do not yet know the way in which parents and teachers support one another's role.

There is evidence that early interactions between parent and child are internalized by the child. According to Harris (1973), each individual internalizes "unquestioned or imposed external events perceived by the person in his early years" (p. 40). These external events are largely composed of relations with one's parents. Hartman and Haavind (1977) found that mothers' teaching styles as they taught a game were comparable to their children's strategies in learning a game from a third party. It seems that young children were modelling their mothers' interactions.

The Transition Between Home and School

Vygotsky (1978) explained that "school learning introduces something fundamentally new into the child's development" (p. 84). He distinguished between **spontaneous concepts** that are learned directly from experience, unmediated by definitions or explanation and **scientific concepts** that begin with the verbal definitions and explanations of a more knowledgeable other. Teaching which becomes more intensive and structured once the young child begins school is necessary for the development of scientific concepts; however Vygotsky (1962) emphasized that the child does not merely imitate adult models but rather actively reconstructs scientific concepts.

Both spontaneous and scientific concepts require active involvement on the part of the child.

> In working its slow way upward, an everyday [or spontaneous] concept clears a path for the scientific concept and its downward development. It creates a series of structures necessary for the evolution of a concept's more primitive, elementary aspects, which give it body and vitality. Scientific concepts in turn supply structures for the upward development of the child's spontaneous concepts toward consciousness nad deliberate use. Scientific concepts grow down through spontaneous concepts; spontaneous concepts grow upward through scientific concepts (p. 109).

Vygotsky seems to be saying that knowledge gained through experiencing and knowledge gained through learning from a more experienced teacher, are both important to cognitive development and that the two means of learning are interrelated in complex ways.

Wells (1983) followed some of the young children in his study into their school years and observed the children in their school environments. Like Vygotsky, he noted general differences in the nature of the children's learning in the home as opposed to the school. Children's learning at home was "almost completely spontaneous,... sporadic, unsystematic and, to a considerably extent, idiosyncratic." School, on the other hand, provided "opportunities for more systematic learning..." (p. 282)

Clay (1979) also looked at the relationship between school and home, but she linked the relationship to reading development:

> Although visual perception and language behavior were patterned in intricate ways during the preschool years they are linked to later progress in reading by a reorganization or transformation that takes place when the child is introduced to printed language. This creates a kind of developmental discontinuity. (p. 11)

Clay (1979) termed the transition from home to school, "developmental discontinuity":

> It is the need to transform preschool skills into new ways of responding that creates the developmental discontinuity, makes the early

> reading behavior a matter of learning, and discredits the 'growth from within' concept of readiness." (p. 12)

It is possible that changes in the environment like the transition from home to school might become a catalyst to the child's development. It would seem that the transition to grade one is a very important point in time to the young child. Escoe (1982) stated, "What is important for each of us to keep in mind is that looking at cognitive development independent of schooling may be a case of jumping to conclusions" (p. 40).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that "ecological transitions" like the one from home to school involve a shift in role or setting. He noted that the research suggested "a powerful factor affecting the capacity of a child to learn in the classroom is the relationship existing between the family and the school" (1986b). Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986a, 1986b), and Satir (1972) both emphasize the importance of the existence and nature of links between settings, in which the individual participates, to healthy development. To Bronfenbrenner, a rich network of interrelationships between home and school would contribute to a feeling of connectedness. The absence of connections or links, Bronfenbrenner observed, leads to alienation of the self from his environment.

In the Wells studies, data were not collected from home and school environments at the same time and therefore comparisons could not be made between interactions in the home and in the school during the ecological transition. "Each child was recorded in his home a few weeks before starting school and then in his classroom half-way through the first term." (Wells, 1983, p. 286) It is therefore not possible to determine the nature of links between home and school.

Brailsford (1985) collected data from the home and the school at the same time. She found that "the High Print Aware children experienced congruence between the literacy beliefs and actions within home and school library contexts whereas the Low Print Aware children were only exposed to such congruences in the school library setting" (p. vii). Links between home and school and between different contexts within the school were stronger for the High Print Aware children. This corroborates Bronfenbrenner's theory concerning the importance of the mesosytem level to the child's literacy development.

Many researchers have discussed the value of Shared Book Experiences to cognitive and language development and to independent reading both in the home and in the school. Reading with children has been observed to stimulate vocabulary acquisition (Ninio & Bruner, 1977;

Goldfield & Snow, 1984), extend and elaborate conversational repertoire (Goldfield & Snow, 1984), relate real-life experience to events in books, (Goldfield & Snow, 1984), contribute to knowledge about the mechanics of reading (Doake, 1981; Goldfield & Snow, 1984), and about books (Holdaway, 1979; Clay, 1979), and to contribute to motivation or intrinsic desire to read (Doake, 1981; Clay, 1979).

The Shared Book Experience occurs naturally in both home and school environments. However, according to Schickedanz (1978, p. 52), there are some basic differences between the home and the school, in the setting, in the task and in the interactions among participants. In the school setting, the size of the group which participates in a Shared Book Experience can vary from the whole class, to a small group, to a dyad. This variation in group size necessitates some differences between the home and the school in physical and visual contact with books. It is also possible, that the nature of the grouping could influence children's concepts of themselves as readers in relation to others (Filby & Barnett, 1982). In the school setting, there is a possibility that there will be a difference in the accessibility of books. There is a possibility that there is variation in purpose for engaging in Shared Book Experience in the home and in the school. In the school, it is possible that the teacher is more likely than the parents to teach reading skills directly (Anderson, 1987).

Wells (1983) and Flood (1977) stressed that the nature of the power structure within a literacy activity is different in the home than in the school. In the school, it is much more likely that the teacher will direct the activity. Wells noted an asymmetry in the question-answer-evaluation structure in the school as opposed to the home. "Compared with parents, teachers, it appears, are typically far more concerned to pursue their own topics-follow their own agenda-than to accept and extend the topics offered by the child" (p. 287). Differences between the home and the school are large enough that one cannot assume they play the same role in children's literacy development.

The Roles of Teacher and Parent, School and Home

Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested that the parent and the teacher should be "partners, not competitors or strangers, in the child's learning process" (p. 226). The child, the parent and the teacher may be regarded as links between home and school microsystems. With regard to the home and the school, Bronfenbrenner suggested:

> ...a key to the enhanced effectiveness of public education lies not within the school itself but in its interconnections with other settings in the society. (p. 226)

From a theory of dissipative structures, the school should remain an autonomous system, although links between the school and outside settings are of vital importance to the young children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

The School

Researchers also found contingent interaction to be the most beneficial to learning and development in context of the school (Gersten & Carnine, [illegible]86; Langer & Applebee, 1986; Duffy, Roehler & Rackliffe, 1986). Contingent interactions add new information to the previous utterance. Duffy, Roehler and Rackliffe found that student awareness of what was being taught was related to the way in which the teacher presented the information. Mosenthal and Na (1980) found that more successful students were more likely to respond contingently to teacher question rather than imitating what the teacher said or responding noncontingently. From these studies, we know that contingency benefits learning but we don't know how this contingent ability develops.

Literacy Experiences in the School

The benefit of repeated readings in becoming a reader was discussed by Samuels (1979). He explained that the Shared Book Experience "is so useful for building reading fluency..." (p. 403). Beginning readers are at a "non-accurate" stage in recognizing words, and it is at this stage, Samuels emphasized, that repeated Shared Book Experiences can support the young child as he "reads" (p. 403). Samuels emphasized that in repeated readings, speed should be emphasized rather than accuracy. He found that "rereading both builds fluency and enhances comprehension." p. 405)

Samuels and Dahl studied elementary school children who were having difficulty reading. They found:

> When repeated readings were used as an adjunct to regular instruction, significant gains were made over the control group in both comprehension and reading speed. (as cited in Samuels, 1979, p. 408)

Curtis (1980) suggested that when word processing skills become automatic, children are more able to focus on the print. There is a possibility however that familiarity of material through repeated readings may serve the same function and reduce the processing load, so that the young child may focus on specific aspects of the reading event while orchestrating other aspects of reading. In this manner, familiar books would serve as a scaffold, until the young reader is able to read independently. It was also noted that Shared Book Experiences may be used in the classroom to teach beginning reading (Holdaway, 1978).

Goldfield and Snow (1983) found that one of the values of Shared Book routines in beginning reading is providing a context for the use of strategies like "say in a particular situation what you have heard others say in the same situation". They found that certain conditions had to be met by the social environment "if the strategy is to be successfully exploited" (p. 553). These conditions will be more fully described in Chapter Five.

Role of the Teacher

In the home, Hartman and Haavind (1977) found that the teaching strategies of parents were comparable to their children's learning strategies. This also seems to be the case in the school. Allington (1984) explained that "beginning readers seem to differ in their responses to textual cues, depending on the type of instructional program they receive" (p. 844). Duffy, Roehler and Rackliffe (1986) observed that differences in the way teachers communicated what was to be learned and how it was to be done were directly reflected in their students' interview responses (p. 10). Effective teachers presented information about reading "within the context of its application in real text", and they "describe[d] reasoning processes associated with strategic skill use" (p. 12).

It is also possible that the success of teacher strategies are also dependent upon the needs and motivations of the students in the class. McCann (1982) studied 445 grade eleven and twelve students. He found:

> ...students with high achievement motivation attained higher grades and reported greater satisfaction when the teacher was perceived to be more nondirective, while students with low achievement motivation attained higher grades and reported greater satisfaction when the teacher was perceived to be more directive. (p. vii-viii)

It seems that highly motivated students prefer situations which afford them room to self-organize thus giving them a more active role in their education. The less motivated students seemed to prefer externally directed situations or directive teaching strategies. The results of this study indicates a dynamic interaction between student motivation and teaching mode preferences.

The Exosystem

The microsystem, the mesosystem, and two other systems complete the picture of the ecology of the child's world. One of the other systems, the exosystem, influences a child's development although the child does not participate in this particular context. For example, the parents' hours of work could determine the number of hours per week which they are able to spend with their children. The teacher's professional training could influence her relations with the children in her class. The building blocks of the mesosystem and the exosystem, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979), are the setting and the social network (p. 8). Any study of emerging literacy would therefore have to include this exosystem information.

The Macrosystem

The most overarching system and last one to be discussed is the macrosystem. The building blocks of the macrosystem are the institution, subculture and culture. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 8) According to Bronfenbrenner, macrosystems are relatively homogeneous in:

> ...the types of settings they contain, the kinds of settings that persons enter at successive stages of their lives, the content and organization of molar activities, roles and relations found within each type of setting, and the extent and nature of connections existing between settings entered into or affecting the life of the developing person. In addition, these consistent patterns of organization and behavior find support in the values generally held by members of the given culture or subculture. (p. 258)

Macrosystems can relate at other levels of structure by setting up expectations about ways in which individuals should act. When society is regarded in this manner, it is possible to better understand how influences at the level of society affect individuals. From an ecological perspective, events occurring in the macrosystem have ramifications in simpler levels of 'being in becoming.' Bronfenbrenner (1979) observed that the "macrosystem also undergoes a process of development and in doing so lends movement to all its composite systems down to the level of the person" (p. 265).

Historically, a macrosystem development that influenced literacy acquisition was the development of the printing press. According to Eisenstein (1985) the printing press not only encouraged the spread of literacy beyond a privileged few, but brought about increased decentration, as one was able to more accurately compare past events with present occurrences.

Like other levels of organization, it appears that the macrosystem may be regarded from both a logical/scientific and an insightful perspective. Zeleny (1985) emphasized that it is important to contemplate social institutions as both:

> Social institutions are therefore mixtures: neither artificial nor natural, both intentionally created and spontaneously generated. (p. 119)

Although the critical age of school entry is related to child development, the decision to begin formal schooling in September, when the child is about six years old, is a macrosystem decision, determined by our culture.

Role of Society

Sawada and Caley (1985) explored the pervasiveness of the classical science paradigm in modern education and suggested that restructuring in the educational system would be more likely if a Prigoginian paradigm were adopted. Bruner (1986) noted:

> Theories of development, by their stipulations about human growth, also create rules and institutions that are just as compelling as mortgage companies ... Elections to the local school board are determined by whether the children of the community are achieving above or below national norms for reading.(p. 134)

This way of evaluating reading performance is related to a logico-scientific way of thinking, and to a technological view of society. Bruner went on to explain:

> Norms, of course, are dependent on the theory of reading that is by now implicitly embodied in the institutionalized culture of school. (p. 134)

Reading theories display the properties of Kuhnian paradigms in that from these theories "spring particular coherent traditions" (Kuhn, 1962, p. 10) of educational thought and practice.

From an ecological perspective, literacy environments are regarded from different levels; each level interrelated in complex ways with specific literacy events. The heart of the ecological perspective of human development is the dyadic interaction. The dyad "becomes a vehicle with a momentum of its own that stimulates and sustains developmental processes for its passengers." (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 66) Within a dyadic relationship, a usual method of communication is oral language. Wells (1981) proposed that:

> ...the way in which each individual child constructs his model of the world, and discovers his place and power of control within it, is most strongly influenced by the values and orientations that are encoded and transmitted in the everyday conversations he has with his parents and other adults in his immediate environment. (p. 257)

The macrosystem strongly influences behavior at all other levels influencing the way one interacts and how well different systems relate.

Language as a Cultural Artifact

In the last three decades, a proliferation of research into language development has had great impact on reading education. Studies in language proceeded from studies on syntax (Brown, 1954) to studies on semantics (Nelson, 1974) to a pragmatic view of language, relating "rules of language use in operation in a particular context" (Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1981, p. 16). These studies have contributed to our understanding that written language as well as oral language is composed of various levels such as phonemes, morphenes, words, sentences, discourse, communicative intensions of speakers, transactional requirements of the culture (Bruner, 1986, p. 81) and also composed of parallel and interrelated cueing systems: syntax, semantics, pragmatics, phonology, prosody. In language studies, there is evidence of a move in attention from focus on the individual, to the individual in relation to the environment (Bloom, 1981).

Language plays a powerful role in enabling us to shape our reality (Britton, 1970). Language appears to have two separate but interrelated functions: of communication and expression of thoughts about one's world - a social and personal function. Tillich (1967) differentiated the two as follows:

> Man has language that denotes. This is one side of language. The other side is communication, which can be achieved in sounds by animals as well as by men; but denotative language presupposes a power possessed only by man among the beings we know. This power is the power of abstraction, the power to create universals in terms of language. (p. 72)

Lindfors (1980) discussed the communicative aspect of language. She defined communicative competence as "the ability to interact verbally in accordance with principles of social appropriateness of language use" (p. 121). She explained:

> the actual experience of discourse is a dynamic one. The structure of the communication evolves as the participants interact, as they initiate and respond. Only after the fact, the completed interaction process, can one look back at the conversation and study it as a product with a given structure. (p. 121)

Thus, according to Lindfors, conversations are dynamic entities. In this respect, they may be compared to Prigogine's "dissipative structures", because new elements may occur at any time which may change the direction of the interaction. It is only after the fact that one may reflect upon what has taken place. It is interesting to note that Lindfors strongly suggested linguistic competence and cognitive development proceed together. She further discussed relationships between linguistic competence or structure; a deep system of principles for organizing sentences, communicative competence and cognitive development. Bruner (1986), Bronfenbrenner (1979), Mead (1934), all emphasized that complex interrelationships exist between thought, speech, action and development. Vygotsky (1978) also noted this relationship: "In the same way that internal speech and reflective thought arise from the interactions between the child and persons in her environment, these interactions provide the source of development of a child's voluntary behavior" (p. 90). It appears that there are complex interrelationships between language, thought, action and social interaction.

Reading as Intersubjectivity

Hunsberger (1982) described reading as a dialogue where both reader and text actively contribute to the meaning which is created as a result of the interaction:

> The text is a seeker of the way to truth and asks the reader to journey along and participate in the search...The reader helps to shape and guide the flow and direction of the conversation just as a good listener influences and responds to a speaker. (p. 5)

Meaning is created intersubjectively, as a result of the interaction between an active reader and a text. Silent reading involves an internal conversation with a silent partner, speaking through the written word, who is physically removed in time and space from the present situation. In silent reading, intersubjective meaning, and the interaction between reader and text is internal; the communication event occurs only within the mind of the reader.

Olson (1980) compared written language with oral communication, in that they have both a social and an intellectual function. He explained:

> Like other forms of language, then, texts have both an intellectual function and a normative, social function. When so viewed, ordinary conversational dialogue, ritualized speech in a traditional society, and written texts have more in common than is at first evident.(p. 106)

Partners in a dyadic relationship create their own meaning and exchange their thoughts with another. If the interaction is to become more than a verbal exchange, partners also negotiate meaning which is a product of the interaction. Thus, within the immediacy of a communication act, the observable interaction that takes place during a communication between partners is transcended by meaning which is created intersubjectively; Intersubjectivity, according to Wood (1980) is "a state of achievement", a "sharing [of] perceptions, conceptions, feelings and intentions". (p. 282) To Wells (1983), intersubjectivity is "human cognitive understanding [which] arises as a process of negotiation between two or more human beings..." (p. 19).

Trevarthen (1980) distinguished between two kinds of intersubjectivity which regularly appear together in a communication event. **Primary subjectivity** is concerned with a reciprocal awareness of the other individual, with an "interlacing of subjective perspectives" (p. 334). **Secondary subjectivity** involves combining direct dyadic interaction with communication about actions on objects, which might be removed from the present situation in space and time (p. 335).

In the immediacy of the communication act, the observable interaction is transcended by meaning which is created intersubjectively (Winter, 1966, p. 95). Within a conversation, meaning evolves as the event evolves. During the moment of communication, a participant is more conscious of the other's stream of consciousness and the interaction than he is of his own thoughts. At this point, if the interaction concerns a developmental dyad, it could be argued that there is social channeling of development.

It is only after the fact that one is aware of oneself. Winter (1966) remarked, "We recognize that our vivid, living present is not given to us except in reflective acts." (p. 95) Both speaker and listener, or reader and writer have the ability to stand back from the dialogue and reflect objectively upon what has transpired. In the act of reflection, there is self channeling of development. In this sense, one's relations with the environment becomes the milieu within which the self actualizes its freedom and fulfillment (Winter p. 32).

During a conversation, or when one is reading a book, there is a possibility that meaning will build to the point where partners in the interaction open themselves to the other. In this moment there is a relinquishing of ego and the centering shifts away from self. This centering does not shift to the text or the other person, but rather to the world that is being disclosed. Out of this process, there is a possibility that a new world might emerge. Gadamer (as cited in Ricoeur, 1976) described this special kind of intersubjectivity as a "fusion of horizons."

Bruner (1986) suggested that the adult uses a scaffolding to help the young child become more skilled. Vygotsky (1978) thought that in studying the interaction between child and adult, we could come to understand more about the young child's potential. We could learn about aspects of the reading process which are in the process of maturation: "functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). In this way we would be on the cutting edge of the child's competence (Bruner, 1986).

Ferreiro (1985) discussed the interrelationship between spontaneity/creativity and social influences or social models. According to Ferreiro, spontaneity and creativity on the part of the subject do not exist in a random fashion. On the other hand, the social environment can play a positive role by providing models which may be assimilated, or in the disequilibrium process, creating situations where incongruencies may be noted by the learner. However, he cautioned that "social models" can also "play a negative, inhibitory role in the process of children's conceptualizations of the written language" (p. 228).

Like Ferreiro, Rawson (1979), whose interest was cognition and reading, was concerned that intervention on the part of the adult might inhibit the young child's growth:

> Piaget raises a critical question concerning intervention: natural development, he suggests, can serve as a basis for new spontaneous constructions; intervention may result in continued dependence on adult help, a learner who will no longer learn anything without such help. Planned intervention appears, however, to be unavoidable. (p. 196)

Both Ferreiro and Rawson appear to be concerned that the individual be allowed to self-organize. According to Priogogine and Stengers (1984), this self organization

is the crucial aspect of dissipative structures that lead to structural re-organization.
However, the role of the more experienced learner, according to Vygotsky, is to lead the child in the process of becoming. "The only 'good learning' is that which is in advance of development" (p. 86).

This then is a paradox. How is it possible that the teacher allow the child room to self-organize and at the same time lead the child toward further development? Sigel (1984) describes this dilemma as:

> The educator's double bind for the '80s is the necessity of developing children's representational competence through reflection, discovery, and inquiry, while also producing effective test scores likely to result from didactic teacher-centered strategies. (p. 21)

It is possible that a key to the "double bind" identified by Sigel is to be found in regarding the teacher not only as one who imparts knowledge, but also as a learner.

Early Interactions

Studies of communication between young children and significant others have enriched our understanding about how development occurs. More specifically, evidence is accumulating that the roots of literacy development are being established at a very young age (Ninio & Bruner, 1977; Wells, 1983; Doake, 1986; Shapiro & Doiron, 1987). This suggests that research concerning dyadic relationships between parents and children and teachers and children would contribute to an understanding of early literacy development as children make their transition to grade one.

The studies in infant interactions might provide some direction for research. Mead (1934) was a pioneer in the study of infant development. He explained that an individual does not merely reproduce or imitate the actions of another, but rather he reconstructs information which he gathers from the environment. "The call on the part of one individual to act calls out different responses in the other" (p. 54). Mead felt that the basis of meaning (p. 75), and the essence of thinking (p. 47), and of language (p. 17), in which the self and the mind emerge, is a threefold or triadic relation between:

> (a) A gesture on the part of one organism in any social act.
> (b) A response on the part of another organism which is directly related to the action of the first organism and its outcome.
> (c) The taking of the role of the other on the part of the self thorugh which meaning of the adjustive response is grasped. (Mead, 1934, p. 77; and as discussed in Winter, 1966, p. 22)

Later writers noted that during early interactions, a unity or "we-relation" seems to be established which suggests an "underlying relatedness" between the child and a parent (Winter, 1966, p. 101) based upon trust (Church & Stone, 1968); upon implicit rules governing events (Ninio & Bruner, 1977); and upon shared knowledge (Ninio & Bruner, 1977). The child is an active participant in the interaction and thus can influence communication. Harris (1973) noted that as early as infancy, the child begins to exert power over his environment through his intentional behavior.

In the studies of young children, it was found that turn-taking or joint problem solving was an important aspect of the communication (Bruner, 1978). This interaction was often reciprocal in nature (Trevarthen, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and was characterized by a shift in the balance of power as the child became more proficient. Bronfenbrenner emphasized the importance in the shifting of the balance of power in favor of the developing person. This is the notion of scaffolding described by Snow (1983) at the beginning of this chapter.

The adult plays a very important role in the interaction. Bruner explained:

> She provides cues based not simply on her knowledge of the language but also on her continually changing knowledge of the child's ability to grasp particular distinctions, forms, or rules. (p. 45)

Researchers emphasized the importance of the adult's responsivity to the young child. (Hartman & Haavind, 1977; Bruner, 1978; Wood, 1980; Snow, 1983). Most writers used the term "contingent" to refer to this type of interaction. Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981) emphasized that the child as well as the adult "negotiates" meaning, or in other words the child's response, to be a successful communicator is also dependent upon the adult. The mother's knowledge of reading and her knowledge of the child's reading development could be the basis for the nature of the scaffolding that occurs.

In summary, it would seem that children's constructs about reading, reading as thinking, children's environments viewed from various ecological levels, reading as cultural artifact, and children's interactions with others as well as reading as intersubjectivity would all be important aspects of children's constructs of themselves as readers in relation with their literacy environments. All these factors need to be considered to help us more fully understand children's growth toward independence in reading.

CHAPTER 3

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the design of the study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the nature of the study and the sample. Then, the method of data collection is presented, including a description of the research techniques. This is followed by a discussion of the data analysis. References are made to the questionnaires; these are included in Appendix B. A summary concludes the discussion of the design of the study.

The Nature of the Study

The purpose of the research was to explore children's developing constructs of themselves as readers in relation to their literacy experiences in the home and in the school, in the context of the Shared Book Experience. The research involved three grade one children, their parents and their grade one teacher. The children chosen to participate in the study were described as being successful by their grade one teacher. The study was heuristic in nature, in that the concern was not with hypothesis testing but rather with discovery. The purpose was to analyze the nature of the existing interrelationships between the person and the milieu (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 36).

The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are three successful grade one children's expressed and demonstrated constructs of themselves as readers, in December of first grade?

2. What are the dynamics of the interrelationships among the three children's views of themselves as readers and their literacy environments, as indicated during interviews and shared book experiences?

   a. How consistent are these three children's concepts of the reading process and purposes for reading with those of their parents and their first grade teacher?

   b. What is the nature of the communication during shared book experiences in the home and in the school?

   c. What types of links exist between the home and the school that foster literacy learning?

3. Do similar patterns emerge within and among the three children's literacy systems?

The study involved overlapping research techniques by which information was gathered in two contexts, the home and the school. Three children, their teacher and their parents were questioned about their views of reading, and about the literacy environments in which they were involved, with specific reference to the Shared Book Experience. Three dyads of child and parent in the home and three dyads of child and teacher in the school, were audiotaped as they shared familiar books. In addition, the entire first grade class, which included the three targeted children and the teacher, were videotaped and audiotaped as they read familiar books together. Thus, there were six different dyads represented as well as the three children and the teacher within the whole group. The data collected from the interviews and recordings of shared book experiences were supported by fieldnotes, the teacher's timetable, logs kept by the parents, and samples of the children's work.

Familiar books were chosen because it has been noted that children who learn to read naturally do so as a result of repeated exposure to familiar stories (Doake, 1981). Therefore, in order to explore those aspects of the literacy environment that might contribute to the literacy development of successful readers, it would seem that familiar books would be most efficacious.

The research was considered ecological, naturalistic, and descriptive in nature. From an ecological perspective, according to Smead (1977) behavior is understood "only when all elements implicated in the interaction are taken into account" (p. 114). Bronfenbrenner (1979) reasoned that "in ecological research, the principal main effects are likely to be interactions" because "human environments" and "the capacities of human beings to adapt and restructure these environments, are [exceedingly] complex in their basic organization..." (p. 38).

This study involved interrelationships among person, task, text, and setting variables. The Shared Book Experience in the home and in the school as well as the subjects' perspectives of literacy experiences in the two microsystems were examined. Consequently, all of the critical elements noted in Jenkins' (1979) tetrahedral model and Mosenthal's (1984) context pyramid have been addressed in this research design: setting, situation organizer, reader, text and task.

A general principle of the research was the recognition of interdependencies among elements of the ecological model. The research was concerned with reciprocal interaction among subjective and objective variables. Vygotsky (1978) asserted that the "keystone of our approach to the study and interpretation of man's higher psychological functions" is that "while admitting the influence of nature on man, asserts that man, in turn, affects nature and creates through his changes in nature new natural conditions for his existence" (p. 60-61).

The research was naturalistic in that it employed "experimental situations that [were] real rather than hypothetical" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 260). Bronfenbrenner stated that, "an investigation is regarded as ecologically valid if it is carried out in a natural setting and involves objects and activities from everyday life" (p.28). Hartman and Haavind (1978) advised that a specific task must be adapted to the child's cognitive capacity and to social customs (p. 13), enabling subjects to behave naturally and to use their ordinary behavior repertoire (p.13). At the same time, however, the situation should be structured to ensure the appearance of relevant behavior (p. 13) and to reduce the ambiguity of the meaning of the behavior (p. 19).

The Shared Book Experience is a regular occurrence in the home and the school setting. It was not contrived for the purposes of this research. Furthermore, this experience was observed as it occurred naturally in both microsystems. The shared books were familiar to all children as a result of their previous reading experiences in the home and in the school. The other research technique, the structured interviews, took place in the familiar environments of the home or the school and reading was discussed in relation to the subjects' real experiences. Thus the settings, the social and physical organization of each setting, the literacy activity selected and the reading materials, were part of the children's natural and familiar literacy environment.

Finally, the study was descriptive. The primary aim was to represent and interpret qualitatively what occurred in both the home and in the school as the three children interacted with parents or teacher during Shared Book Experiences.

An explanation of the procedure by which data was collected and the method of data analysis follows a description of the sample.

The Sample

A grade one classroom, early in the school year, and three home environments linked to that grade one classroom, were considered to be an appropriate setting for the present study for three reasons. First, the grade one children's literacy systems were observed when they were just beginning to become independent readers in order to come to know something of the factors that contributed to their literacy development. This postulate is similar to one technique that Vygotsky (1978) used to study "the course of development of process" (p. 12). He "set a task before the child that exceeded his knowledge and abilities, in order to discover the rudimentary beginnings of new skills" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 13). Second, the home and the school have both been identified as the two most critical microsystems in literacy development (Manning and Manning, 1984; Wells, 1985; Clay, 1979). Third, interrelationships between the home and the school, or the mesosystem, are important. Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that adaptation during the ecological transition from one microsystem to another and interconnections between settings "play a major role in affecting the direction and rate of development" (p. 232). According to Bronfenbrenner, "every ecological transition consititues a ready-made experiment ...set[ting] the stage both for the occurrence and the systematic study of developmental phenomena" (p. 27). Because the three grade one children interacted with significant others and literacy materials in both the home and in the school, it is possible that as they adapted to the ecological transition which took place when they entered grade one, the interconnections which existed between home and school could affect their development in reading.

One literacy activity, the Shared Book Experience, was chosen because it occurs naturally in both the home and in the school. It was felt that selecting an activity common to both settings would facilitate a representation and explication of interrelationships at the mesosystem level.

Three children, described as being successful readers by their grade one teacher, together with their teacher and their parents, were chosen as subjects for this study. The size of the sample was small, in order to enable the researcher to study in considerable depth the three children's constructs of themselves as readers concurrently with the literacy experiences of each child.

The size and nature of the sample was chosen for three reasons. First, Holdaway (1979, p. 17) and Doake (1986, p. 2) suggested that a study of children who are making healthy development in literacy would make an important contribution to educational research and practice. Once the systems of successful readers together with their literacy environments are more clearly understood, the patterns noted which cultivate growth in literacy could be of assistance to children experiencing difficulty.

Second, a study of individuals as opposed to the epistemic individual, or to group trends, would contribute to a better understanding of the interrelationships of various factors which might have an impact on each child's literacy development. Frymier (1980) explained:

> Groups do not learn...Groups affect the learning of individual students in many ways, of course, but it is always individual students who learn or fail to learn...The differences within any group (i.e., the differences among individual students) are always greater and generally more significant educationally than the differences between groups. (p. 390)

Third, it was intended that the research study, including the sample, should be comparable to that of the situation within elementary classrooms where teachers are required to work with individual children within a group setting. Because the dynamics of the research setting were comparable to the real situation, research findings would be more easily interpreted and applied.

Selection of the School Microsystem

The superintendent and assistant superintendent from a northeast city school district were contacted and asked to recommend first grade programs where the following criteria were met: (a) reading was being taught effectively, (b) the teacher was experienced at the primary level, (c) Shared Book Experiences were a regular part of the language arts program, (d) reading was integrated with the language arts and the language arts was integrated with other subjects, (e) there should be no split grades or family groupings.

During the pilot study, the researcher visited four grade one classrooms. The variation in instructional emphasis was considerable. The target classroom was chosen because this particular teacher used Shared Book Experiences as an integral component of her beginning reading program; others tended to include the Shared Book Experience as a discrete activity.

The classroom selected for the study was one of two grade one classrooms within an elementary/junior high school. The school was situated in an older middle class area of a small city. According to the principal of the school, the grade one classroom involved in the study could best be described as heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic status and ability levels.

The grade one teacher was informed of the nature and purpose of the research. She agreed to participate in the study. She was made aware that some students would be targeted and that there would be an acclimatization period. An acclimatization period was considered necessary for the children and the teacher to become accustomed to having the researcher in the classroom. The teacher was advised that during the initial part of the data collection, she would not know the identity of the target pupils.. This was considered necessary in order to avoid special treatment of the subjects. The teacher was informed of the identity of the students during the second interview.

Description of the School Microsystem

At the time of the study, there were nineteen children in the classroom. There were fourteen boys and five girls. Two of the children in the class were special needs children. The class was taught by the same teacher throughout the day, except when the children were taken out for music and movement instruction.

The teacher received her B.Ed. from the University of Manitoba and had taught with the Cell group in Winnipeg which held a whole language philosophy of teaching reading. Fifteen of her sixteen years of teaching experience were at the primary level. Seven years were spent teaching grade one; three years were spent in a nongraded primary class and two years in a one/two split grade. She also taught grade 7/8 for one year. Another year, she taught the same children both in kindergarten and grade one. Most of the teacher's practical experience was at the grade one level.

A teacher aide assisted the teacher for the entire day specifically to help the two handicapped children. A student teacher from the Early Childhood Department at the local college, parent volunteers, and health unit nurses, were also present for varying lengths of time. The children were accustomed to adults coming and going in their classroom. Therefore, as long as an appropriate acclimatization period was built in, the classroom ecology would not be upset as a result of this study.

The researcher visited the grade one classroom eight times in the three months, September, October, November, 1986. During these visits, the researcher established herself as a friendly observer. She became familiar with the school environment. She observed the interaction between adults, students, the physical layout of the classroom, organizational principles of the school and of the classroom, and literacy materials. She learned something of the overall literacy development which took place in the classroom between September and December. During these visits the children and the teacher became accustomed to having the researcher and the A-V equipment in the classroom. There was a decrease in overt reactions to the researcher and the equipment. The attention of the children and the teacher was not interrupted as the researcher proceeded with her observations.

The classroom was self contained. It was divided into four areas: a reading area containing flipcharts, easels, movable blackboard,and a record player; a work area containing tables, chairs, blackboards; a study corner containing a sofa and listening posts; and a central materials area where individualized math and language arts materials, the children's journals and home-made books, binders of seatwork, and art supplies, were kept. Published picture books were in evidence throughout the classroom in all but the central materials area. The books were placed on stands, on bookshelves, on chalk ledges, in trays or bins, and on the heat register. At the beginning of the year, predictable books were placed in a specific bin. The children were allowed access to all books in the classroom except those on the teacher's bookshelf situated beside her desk. A diagram of the classroom can be found in Appendix A.

Within the classroom the children were not assigned a particular seat but moved throughout the day from area to area as the teacher directed them. The children sometimes remained in a large group while at other times they worked individually or divided into three heterogeneous small groups. Children took books and other materials from one area to another, including the central materials area. They were allowed free access to all books except the teacher's bookshelf.

During language arts instruction, the teacher used a variety of materials and instructional aids. She used mainly predictable picture books and other story books of various forms, lengths and formats at the beginning of the year. A few of the books were enlarged into Big Books, but most of the books that the teacher used were standard size. In addition, she used language experience charts, poems, filmstrips, audio records and pocket charts.

Within this grade one classroom, language arts was taught in an integrated manner. Writing and reading activities were combined. Although the teacher had specified times scheduled for language arts, totalling 590 minutes per week, language arts activities took place throughout the day, and were integrated with mathematics, social studies, science and health.

The teacher encouraged a great deal of oral participation and physical movement including actions to stories, songs and poems. She frequently praised the children, particularly for improved work and good organizational behaviors; she praised the children collectively and individually.

The school week was structured around certain established routines. Within those routines, there was a great deal of flexibility. The children gathered together as a whole group each morning when they arrived at school. Among other activities, the teacher or teacher's aide, together with the students, composed a journal format communique. As they were composing the journal, the children were encouraged to spell the words as they were written on the blackboard and to read orally what had been written down. The communiques contained information about what was happening at school and also what was happening in the children's homes. The communiques were then copied, duplicated and sent home with the children each night. In addition to the group journal, entries in individual journals were made almost every day.

Another common whole group activity was the Shared Book Experience. These activities took place at various times during the day. The teacher read stories to the whole class on a daily basis, encouraging oral listening comprehension. At the beginning of the year, according to the teacher, there were about six Shared Book Experiences each day. Some of the story sessions included familiar books which were read cooperatively with the children; others introduced new books. If the book invited oral participation, the children were encouraged to join in. The books were often used as a stimulus for a variety of activities such as writing stories, drawing and dramatization.

The small group sessions were quite fluid and seemed to change in structure, purpose and format as the year progressed. During the small group sessions, at the beginning of the year, the children rotated between writing, manipulative materials and reading activities.

The teacher felt that in addition to the assistance of adults, children could help each other in the small group sessions. In her opinion, a heterogeneous grouping was preferable. Therefore she placed an equal number of "high, medium, and low" readers within each of the three groups. The teacher worked with the reading group while the teacher aide, student teacher and/or parent volunteers helped the writing and manipulative materials groups.

In the writing and manipulative materials groups, the children worked individually. In the writing group, they worked in booklets containing sentence frames, or on blank pieces of paper. In the manipulative materials group, they worked individually or cooperatively. An example of one of the activities in the manipulative materials group was a mini-pocket chart and a set of word cards. The words could be arranged on the pocket chart to form a poem which the children had learned in school. The children were each given two binders. One contained seatwork and the other was filled with songs and poems that the children had learned in class. Children were allowed to pick up the binders whenever they had unstructured time.

In the reading sessions, the teacher often worked with the small group rather than on a one-on-one basis. She did, however, attend to individuals within the group. Children were actively involved. They were required to listen, to speak and to observe. During the reading sessions, the teacher read with the children from picture books and Big Books, encouraging everyone to participate by reading cooperatively with her. The teacher together with the children composed language experience stories using books as a stimulus. Still other activities were extensions from the familiar books. They involved use of prior knowledge in brainstorming and categorizing. On several occasions, the text of the familiar book was printed on strips. The children then cooperated to put the strips in the appropriate order to recreate the text.

The children also worked individually at various activities. These assignments were linked to other activities in the whole group sessions. For example, on subsequent days, repeated reading of a shared book led to a language experience story composed by the whole group. Then, the children were requested to write their own sentence and draw a picture about it. Copying from the material around the room was accepted, particularly at the beginning of the year, but children were encouraged to take a risk and produce their own ideas.

At various times in the day, individual children read with adults. After morning recess and afternoon recess, children read books without the mediation of a more experienced adult reader. On these occasions, children read on their own using free choice books, or they read in partners using repetitive or predictable books. During this time the teacher didn't read. She circulated among the children or conversed with the teacher's aide as they prepared for the next activity. Each day, after morning recess, a small number of children were allowed to go to the library during Shared Reading Time.

Selection of the Three Children

Three children who attended this grade one class were chosen as subjects for this study. It was intended that the sample selected should meet the following criteria: (a) The children were to be part of the group of students considered by their teacher to be successful. Children who were able to read print when they began grade one should be excluded. (b) The children should be of average intelligence, neither gifted nor have any obvious learning difficulties that might affect reading development. (c) The children should be of approximately the same verbal ability. (d) The children should have no obvious attentional deficits. (e) Chronological age should be similar. (f) The children should not have repeated kindergarten or grade one. (g) If possible, the children should be the same sex. (h) The home background should be comparable.

The parents should read with children in the home environment (1-2 times per week). (i) The number of caregivers in the family home should be comparable. (j) They should be approximately the same socio-economic status. Controlling these factors should make comparisons among individuals more valid and will allow the researcher to more easily identify patterns that might exist among the three literacy systems while still considering each child individually. This will allow the researcher to focus on such home-based variables as "parental attitudes, home literacy contexts and home interactions" (Brailsford, 1985, p. 569-570).

The teacher was asked to compile a list of students. She was requested to divide the list into three groups with regard to literacy development: high, medium and low. The list that she assembled contained three students labelled as high, eleven labelled as medium, and five students labelled as low. Successful readers seemed to be defined by the grade one teacher to be anyone at or above the class median. The groupings seemed quite fluid, varying as the year progressed. In late November, the target pupils were selected.

Of the three children in the high group, one was exempt since he was reading when he entered grade one; the other two were identified as target pupils. The parents of these two students in the high group were contacted by telephone. They were informed about the purpose and nature of the research and were invited to participate in the study. One of the parents accepted, while the other was unable to participate because the mother was to begin a new job the week the data was to be gathered. The teacher was then requested to divide the children in the middle group into more and less successful readers. Three children were identified by the teacher as being most successful. From this high middle list, the parents of two children were asked to participate in the study and both agreed.

Parents and children were cautioned not to discuss the research with the teacher until after the data collection was completed. The three children chosen to participate in the study met all criteria for sample selection except the following: First, two of the children were boys and one child was a girl. This ratio of two to one was approximately equivalent to the number of boys and girls in the classroom. Second, the number of caregivers in the home at the time of the study varied. All three children had two parents. However, in one family, the grandparents were living in the same house at the time of the study, although they planned to move at Christmas. Third, the three children did not attend the same kindergarten. However, all three children had attended this classroom since school began in the fall. All three children's birthdays were within one month of each other.

Data Collection

Mosenthal (1984) stated that:

> In investigating reading comprehension in classroom reading lessons, researchers are faced with the problem that the acquisition of reading comprehension is both a recursive and reflexive phenomenon which changes over time. (p. 29)

According to Mosenthal, in order to come to understand how children learn to read, one should combine both recursive aspects of reading comprehension which are concerned with cause and effect of development over time, and reflexive (spontaneous) phenomenon which are concerned with the dynamics of a literacy situation. The study was designed with this in mind.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in a different classroom in the fall to refine research techniques. Four children and two mothers were interviewed. The verbal interactions of two mother/child dyads reading books together were taped. One mother/child dyad was observed as they read books together. The researcher visited the classroom on eight separate occasions in order to familiarize herself with the classroom environment and to acclimatize the children and the teacher to the presence of the researcher and the A-V equipment.

The Procedure

In this present study, the data was collected within a limited time frame. Most of the data was collected within one week in December, 1986. During the data collection information was gathered from the home and the school microsystems simultaneously. This was effected in order to study spontaneous aspects of the situation within recursive aspects of the situation: interrelationships between the three children's constructs of themselves as readers and the dynamics of the three children's literacy systems, at one specific period in their literacy development.

Because the data was collected in the home and the school simultaneously, this entailed the identification of the target children and their parents from the beginning. Consequently, the three children knew that they were participants in the study during the whole group Shared Book Experiences. Although this made the situation less natural than desired, it was unavoidable due to the nature of the study. The teacher was not told which students were to be observed until after the study.

The researcher visited each home on three separate occasions. Although it was necessary for the researcher to make only two visits, one for each of the two interviews, three visits took place for ease in scheduling. The extra visit to the homes enabled the researcher to become more familiar with the children's home environments. The classroom was visited three times as well during the data collection.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that in order to find out about "contrasting environments involved in the ecological transition or the children's process of adaptation after arrival in the new setting," investigations should rely on observation and interviewing. They should employ "experimental situations that are real rather than hypothetical" (p. 260). In this present research, information was gathered principally through observation of Shared Book Experiences with the aid of audio-visual equipment and through structured interviews in the children's natural environments.

The manner in which data were collected was as follows. The discussion will begin with the structured interviews. Then, the Shared Book Experiences will be discussed. Lastly, auxiliary research techniques will be described.

The Structured Interviews

Two structured interviews were designed to tap three areas of early childhood literacy experience. Subjects were questioned about (a) their concepts of themselves as readers, (b) their perceptions of their literacy environments, (c) their perceptions of Shared Book Experiences. It was intended that Interview A would pertain to the subjects' concepts of themselves as readers while Interview B would be concerned with information related to the children's literacy environments and specifically, the Shared Book Experiences.

The first interview was structured through the use of a questionnaire which was adapted largely from one developed by Canney and Winograd (1979). The purpose of the original questionnaire was to research children's concepts of reading process, particularly if the subjects emphasized meaning or decoding. The present questionnaire was concerned with the subjects' perceptions of reading purpose and reading process. According to Hiebert (1981, p. 240), previous research about young children's general notions of reading had explored primarily either knowledge of processes or knowledge of purposes; she saw the need to include both.

Items included in Questionnaire A focussed on how the subjects felt about reading, the value they placed on reading, how reading fit into their lives, reasons for reading, what they read, their understanding of the learning to read process, and how they learned (or were learning) to read, and what they thought reading was.

During the pilot study, three additional themes that placed the individual's concepts of reading within the context of their literacy environments were added to the original questions in Interview A: The amount of time each subject spent reading in comparison with other activities, discussions of both microsystems rather than just one, and the subjects' early reading experiences.

Interview B was designed to probe the nature of the interaction between the subject and significant others, and the nature of the materials used, while the subjects were involved in literacy activities, particulary the Shared Book Experience. Part One of Interview B dealt generally with literacy environments in the home and in the school while Part Two focussed specifically on one literacy context, the Shared Book sessions. These two sections were adapted from Doake (1981), Hayden (1985) and Wells (1981).

Questions in Part One of Interview B included the following: Subjects' perceptions of the interactive behavior of themselves and others during literacy activities, the kinds of activities in which the adult and child were engaged, and the kinds of literacy materials utilized in the respective microsystems. Questions in Part Two of Interview B tapped the nature of the story sessions - when, where, materials, process, purpose and affect.

Every interview was recorded on tape. Recorded conversations enabled the researcher to concentrate on the interaction with the subjects rather than taking notes. The researcher was able to maintain eye contact with the subjects, which tended to make all subjects feel comfortable. Thus, it allowed the researcher to react thoughtfully to responses, to decide when and how to use acceptable probes. The interview became more like a conversation about reading rather than a checklist of items about which the researcher wanted some answers. Participants seemed open and willing to discuss the questions with the researcher.

Because the interviews were preserved, nuances of meaning through pauses, emphases, inflections, which otherwise would have been lost, were captured on tape and aided the researcher in providing a more accurate description of each subject and his literacy environment. It was possible to consider the negotiation of meaning between researcher and participant. In the data analysis, the researcher was able to compare the audio recordings with her perceptions of the interviews.

Each of the seven subjects was interviewed on two separate occasions. Interview A took place at the beginning of the week and Interview B took place at the end of the week. It was intended that Interview B take place after the Shared Book Experiences (SBE's) in order to ensure that information discussed did not contaminate the SBE's and to enable the researcher to question the subjects about the SBE's.

Since parent, teacher and child interviews were structured through questions that were alike in form and content for all participants, it was felt that their responses would be more readily comparable. However, because each person and his situation was considered unique, the researcher endeavored to gauge conversations within the structure to meet the needs of the individual in the situation. For example, the manner of presentation differed in the adult and child interviews. The researcher endeavored to make the questions more concrete for the child through the use of role playing, imagination and familiar props. Donaldson (1978) would support this adaptation since she felt that young children would "show skill as thinkers and language users" if "they are dealing with real-life, meaningful situations" in familiar contexts (p.12).

Information offered by the subjects was often probed in more depth by the researcher in order to gain a deeper understanding of the subjects' personal literacy constructs. However, the researcher took care not to "put ideas into the subjects' heads" by using the prompts considered acceptable by Canney and Winograd

(1979): "Is there anything else?" "Can you tell me more about it?" "What is it about ____ that you have to know?" Unacceptable prompts were "Is that all?" "What else?" "Why not?" The interviewer's comments were neutral and accepting rather than denotative.

Some of the subjects' explanations about the nature of reading were rather explicit, while some remained implicit. At times, one had to "read between the lines" and piece together comments and behaviors from different contexts, to ascertain what they thought. The three children's comments, in particular, were tied to the concrete environment. They were much more able to express themselves when discussions centred upon concrete situations (Donaldson, 1978).

The Shared Book Experiences

A second research technique consisted of tape recordings which were made of the children and more experienced learners as they engaged in Shared Book Experiences in the home and in the school.

Two of the texts used during Shared Book Experiences were selected from lists compiled by parents and the teacher's aide. Two of the three books being shared were common in both the home and in the school in order to have a basis for comparing the microsystems involved. During the introductory telephone conversations, the three parents were requested to compile a list of books which they frequently read with their children. The researcher, together with the teacher's aide, compiled a list of books which were frequently read with the children in the classroom. It was intended that two books common to all lists would be selected. However, it was found that although some books were common to some of the lists, there were no books that were named in both the home and in the school for all children. Therefore, it was decided to choose two books equally familiar to all three children; these were taken from the school list. The books were Mud Puddle by Robert Munsch and Red is Best by Kathy Stinson. The selection of the third book which was read in the home environment, was left up to each child and his/her parent. An equal number of books was analyzed from each microsystem. Three shared book sessions were analyzed in the home: Mud Puddle, Red is Best, and one other. Three shared book sessions were analyzed in the school: Mud Puddle (whole group); Mud Puddle (child-teacher dyad); Red is Best (whole group). Because books were regularly brought into the home from the school, and were read at home in addition to books originating in the home environment, this situation was comparable to the natural situation. Because books were shared both in large groups and one-on-one, the research situation was also comparable to the situation as it existed naturally.

At the first parent interview, the three parents were provided with a packet containing a covering letter which gave suggestions for taping, a blank cassette tape, the first familiar book, an information sheet about the shared book experience, and a diary form. Copies of these forms are included in the Appendix. The parents were again given the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

Parents and teachers were encouraged to preserve the naturalness of the situation. In the home microsystem, parents were asked to read with their children as they usually would do, on two separate occasions, preferably Tuesday, December 3 and Wednesday, December 4. The three parent/child dyads were requested to include two familiar books, one each session, along with whatever other material that they would normally read. If the books were the same, there would be a consistent basis from which to compare verbal interactions at home and at school.

In the home, the sessions were recorded on audiotape which was operated by the parents. The researcher decided not to have the families record an initial SBE to alleviate the novelty of the situation, which could be discarded, because there was a concern that more than two scheduled Shared Book Experiences in one week would upset the ecology of the situation. In addition, the researcher did not want to destroy the good will that was evident throughout the study by asking too much of the participants.

In the school microsystem, the teacher indicated the times she would normally be sharing books with her students, either in whole groups or in small groups. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the teacher read with the children for 120 minutes each day, from 10:30 to 12:00 noon and from 13:00 to 13:30. Shared books sessions involving the two familiar books, were recorded on these two days; on Tuesday at 10:45 in the morning and on Wednesday at 1:00 in the afternoon. The teacher was encouraged to do as she normally would during those sessions.

Verbal interaction between teacher and students was recorded on audiotape. In addition, the session was videotaped. As a result of the pilot study, it was decided that picture as well as sound was necessary when observing a whole group, in order to capture verbal and nonverbal interaction. Unlike the individual sessions, it was very difficult to distinguish who was talking. Also, in a many-to-one situation, it was found that nonverbal interaction was more significant, because there was a great deal more taking place at one time.

During each whole group SBE, the three target children were observed as they interacted with the teacher, the text, and with their peers.

The designated books, along with the presence of the A-V equipment created a less than natural situation. However, the familiar contexts in which the situations took place, the absence of the researcher in the individual SBE's and the accustomed presence of the researcher in the group SBE's, denoted a more natural situation.

During the second teacher interview, the teacher mentioned that she, parent volunteers and the teacher aide read with individual students on a regular basis as well as with whole groups and small groups. Moreover, in the pilot study, it was noted that there were differences between dyadic and whole group SBE's. In the latter case, children supported each other as they read stories together. Therefore, because the one-on-one situation occurred naturally in the school microsystem, and because a difference was noted in the nature of the interaction within whole group and individual SBE's, it was decided that the teacher would record herself and each of the three children reading Mud Puddle by Robert Munsch together in the school microsystem.

In summary, during the Shared Book sessions in the home and in the school, the first familiar book, Mud

Puddle by Robert Munsch, was shared in the home, and it was shared in the school with the whole group as well as with the three dyads of teacher and child. The second familiar book, Red Is Best by Kathy Stinson, was shared in the home, and in the school with the whole group. In addition, in the home microsystem, a book unique to each home environment was shared in the same session as either Mud Puddle or Red Is Best.

Auxiliary Research Techniques

In a systems approach to research, information is obtained about ecological environments through observations of interrelationships among elements within natural settings. Consequently, to obtain a more complete picture of the three children's literacy systems, auxiliary research techniques were employed which served to clarify and augment information gathered.

During the data gathering week, observations, field notes, diaries and samples of the children's home literacy activities, contributed to a richer understanding of the context within which the children lived, and more specifically the context in which Shared Book Experiences took place, than would have been possible had the interviews and tape recordings been the only means of gathering information.

The researcher kept observations and field notes, which consisted of: (a) the physical environments in the homes, (b) activities which the participants were involved in when the researcher visited the home and the school, (c) remarks made by the subjects that were not recorded on tape, and (d) the researcher's perceptions of what was taking place in the home and in the school.

Diaries were kept by the parents and the teacher on the two days when books were shared in the home. Through the diaries, it was possible to learn more about the context in which the Shared Book Experiences took place. A diary form is included in the Appendix. Samples of written work which the children did in the home environment were also collected.

The Data Analysis

The data was interpreted within the framework of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of Developmental Psychology from an Ecological Perspective, Prigogine and Stenger's (1984) theory of Dissipative Structures, theories of child development discussed in Chapter Two, and reading research concerning beginning literacy.

In the data analysis, systems theory was used as the basis within which data was analyzed. General Systems Theory, as described by Kenneth Boulding

> is the skeleton of science in the sense that it aims to provide a framework or structure of systems on which to hang the flesh and blood of

> particular disciplines and
> particular subject matters in an
> orderly and coherent corpus of
> knowledge. (as cited in Becvar and
> Bevar 1982 p.9)

Bronfenbrenner's approach to systems theory became the foundation upon which this thesis was built. However, slight changes in his theory were deemed necessary. One change in Bronfenbrenner's framework was the definition of roles. In this study, it seemed that both Kelly's (1955) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) definitions of roles, which are described in Chapter Two, were valid. In Chapter One, role was defined as a set of expectations about how a reader and learner in specific literacy contexts interacts with others and with texts, but also how others interact with that person; the expectations developing through negotiation between the individual's own construction system and specific literacy contexts, which are embedded within the larger culture. A description of role which includes both definitions is compatible with Bronfenbrenner's emphasis on reciprocity between the developing individual and his environment.

Another change was the notion of development in terms of "arrows in time" as opposed to "trajectories", as Prigogine and Stengers (1984) suggested. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

The data analysis consists of two parts: researcher objectivity and the procedure for data analysis.

Researcher Objectivity

During the data analysis, the researcher's point of view was taken into account as another point of view on the situation observed. Prigogine explained that "Whatever reality may mean, it always corresponds to an active intellectual construction" (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984).

Reflection about one's personal expectations concerning the nature of reading and of reading instruction was considered necessary to preclude the presence of unconscious beliefs which might interfere with the existing situation as portrayed in the data collected. The stance adopted in this present research varied somewhat from the classical science paradigm, where

> a description is objective to the extent the observer is excluded and the description itself is at a fundamental level, a point outside the world. (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984)

The researcher attempted to keep an open mind toward alternative viewpoints, to accept other points of view in order to minimize distortion of the findings.

The following arguments were perceived as possible stumbling blocks in retaining an open mind: How should the individual subject be viewed? One can either look at commonalities across individuals or look at a situation in all its complexity, endeavoring to understand how each individual in relation with others is dealing with circumstances at a specific point in time.

—How are the children's constructs of reading being viewed in relation to teaching reading in the school context? Children may be regarded from three perspectives: First, what children should know as independent readers and how closely they reach that standard; second, what they do know so that adults can help them to build upon that; or third, what they are in the process of knowing, and how they are moving with the help of others through successive approximations toward independent reading, (which itself is not an endstate, but merely another beginning). All three perspectives should be considered equally valid if one is to keep an open mind.

From whose perspective(s) are the Shared Book Experiences being viewed? The following perspectives are possible: the child's, the adult's, the intersubjectivity, the researcher's, or one which takes all others into account, allowing for the possibility of reciprocity. Should the child and the home adapt to the school or should the school adapt to the child and the home? If one considers that reciprocal relations could exist between the home and the school, rather than viewing the situation from a cause and effect model from the outset, one would be in a better position to see if causal relations do exist.

Should reading be viewed as a skill or as an art? If one endeavored to keep an open mind, allowing that reading and education could be both, accurate interpretations of the subjects' viewpoints should be facilitated.

What is the view of reading/teaching held by the researcher? The researcher needs to be aware of her orientation but both conceptually-driven and data-driven methods of teaching reading should be considered to have merit. Familiarity with both conceptions of reading along with a more interactive notion should facilitate a more objective perspective.

The Procedure

When the data collected were analyzed, information from all research techniques was combined, compared and analyzed according to the three research questions and to the research framework developed in Chapter Two. The research framework evolved along with the data analysis and only reached its final form when the data analysis was completed. The researcher moved back and forth between data and research literature, as the analysis required. In this manner, patterns emerged which provided the basis for further analysis.

All recordings of Shared Book Experiences and interviews were transcribed verbatim. Then, utterances were coded according to the research purpose and questions, and the research framework.

Coding in both interviews and Shared Book Experiences depended upon the meaning, rather than on pre-specified units. Therefore, sometimes one sentence fragment was coded in several categories and sometimes several sentences were coded in one category. (Hartman and Haavind, 1978, p. 40) Because the nature of the coding technique used in the questionnaires was so sensitive to the full context, it would be very difficult to completely specify.

Verbal interactions during Shared Book Experiences were studied in order to learn about the dynamics of the interrelationships among the three children's views of themselves as readers and their relations with their parents and teacher. The verbal interactions were analyzed from three perspectives: (a) from the child's contribution, (b) from the adult's contribution and, (c) from the relationship between the two. Both generic verbal interaction patterns and content specifically related to reading were considered. The researcher used terminology which could refer to both child and adult to avoid biasing the data prior to analysis.

Analysis of verbal interactions patterns was based upon the research of Hartman and Haavind (1977), Snow (1983), Wood (1980), Ninio and Bruner (1977), Bruner (1978), Trevarthen (1980), Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981), Mosenthal and Na (1980), Duffy, Roehler and Rackliffe (1986), Langer and Applebee (1986). The study of content was based upon Clay (1979), Doake (1981), and Irwin (1986).

As the data analysis progressed, it became more and more evident that both recursive elements, captured by the coding system, and spontaneous elements which disrupted the patterns noted, seemed to contribute to the child's understanding of reading. It was found that a structured coding system tended to ignore spontaneous elements. The data analysis changed somewhat at this point and a new objective of the analysis was to be open to both recursive and spontaneous elements. This proved to be a difficult task. When coding the data, there was a great danger for the recursive elements to predominate and thereby render the data static, in effect destroying the life-giving aspects. This is particularly so because it seemed that one spontaneous happening might be as much or more molar for a child than high frequency recursive patterns, and it would therefore have a greater impact upon the child's potential development. The theories of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Prigogine and

Stengers (1984), Kelly (1955) and Vygotsky (1979), provided assistance in studying both the spontaneous and recursive aspects.

Before each utterance was coded, the researcher examined the context of the utterance. Furthermore, each utterance was also analyzed with respect to the whole experience, and to other experiences, in order to identify spontaneous and recursive elements. In this way, the researcher was able to see where utterances (a) followed patterns, (b) didn't follow patterns and (c) tended to alter the patterns that were being revealed by the coding system.

From the analysis of interviews and Shared Book Experiences, patterns of interrelationships among the children's expectations about reading and their roles, relations and activities in the home and in the school began to emerge. In this study, the Shared Book Experience was used as a context within which to view the dynamics of the interrelationships. However, as the coding system became refined, it was evident that a more detailed analysis of conversations, from which the Shared Book Experiences would be regarded not only as a context but also as a cause and a consequence of reading development, would prove to be a rich source of information about how young children were becoming independent readers. This is beyond the scope of this present study and would require one to pose the research questions in another way. These are possibilities for further research that will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The data was organized into two sections. One section emphasized literacy activities and relations at the level of the dyad, the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. The other consisted of a discussion of roles, or expectations about reading.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that roles, relations and activities are the building blocks of the microsystem. Molar activities "can serve equally, and sometimes simultaneously, as cause, context, and consequence of psychological growth" (p. 54). The Shared Book Experience proved to be a viable context from which the three children's developing constructs of reading could be studied in relation to their literacy environments.

Summary

The design of the study was descriptive, involving overlapping research techniques in two settings: the home and the school. It involved three grade one children, who were identified by their teacher as successful readers, together with their teacher and their mothers. Two research techniques: structured interviews, and tape recordings of children and significant others reading familiar books together, were the principal sources of data. In addition, field notes, diaries, timetables, samples of the children's work in the home setting, enriched the data collected and provided a clarification of patterns noted. Data collected in the contexts of the home and the school were first analyzed holistically and then the researcher moved back and forth from the wholes to parts to wholes, as discussed earlier in this chapter, in order to study the dynamics of the interrelationships of factors which together contributed to the three children's literacy experiences sampled during the week of data gathering.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Chapter four is divided into two parts. Section One, Relations and Activities, is concerned with social relations and literacy activities within the three children's literacy environments. Section One involves a description of the home microsystems of the three children and the teacher. This is followed by a description of the ecological transition from home to grade one. The ecological transition will be discussed from two persepectives, from the level of society, the macrosystem, and connections existing between home and school, the mesosytem. An explanation of the school environment follows. Section One ends with a discussion aboutlearning to read in the school and in the home and a summary.

Section Two, Reading: The Child's Perspective, is concerned with the three children's expectations about reading in relation to their verbal behaviors during Shared Book Experiences. Section Two begins with a discussion about the three children's expectations about their roles as learners in relation to their roles as readers. This is followed by a description which focusses more specifically on the three children's roles as readers. Included in this last part is information concerning goal structures, self efficacy and responsibility, and orchestration of aspects of language. Throughout Chapter Four, individuals' perceptions about reading and their verbal interactions will be considered separately where data were unique and in combination where similarities were evident. The idiosyncratic nature of the three children's literacy experiences would seem to be most important to an understanding of their development in literacy because young children so closely identify with the specific contexts in which they live. (Donaldson, 1978) The reading processes described by Irwin (1986) were used in this discussion.

Relations and Activities

Gordon, Brenda and Michael were actively engaged in literacy activities both in the home and at school. This active involvement occasioned a certain unique or chaotic quality; a spontaneity, or element of surprise, which was evident both in what they said and what they did in their roles as reader, in their relations with others, and in their involvement with specific literacy activities.

In addition to the spontaneity, each child's literacy environment was ordered both inadvertently and deliberately to support their literacy development. This structure or recursion tended to be one of three types:

1. **Personal recursion:** the individual constructed his environment to support his present level of being and his potential development.

2. **Implicit recursion:** the environment was structured in a manner which supported the child but neither the child nor significant others seemed aware of what was taking place.

3. **Explicit or intentional recursion:** the environment was consciously structured by the adults to support the child.

Development and change seemed to involve a nesting of spontaneous and recursive aspects of child in relation with literacy environment - the recursive aspects providing some stability while the spontaneous aspects provided an impetus for growth. In the data, what seemed to be happening is that spontaneous aspects might themselves become recursive in nature. Stability seemed to be enhanced if these aspects became more conscious for the child or happened again in similar circumstances. In this manner, spontaneous or novel elements became recursive in that they could be expected. Change was a spiral. More stable elements themselves could be changed when new spontaneous elements were introduced. Thus, recursive elements seemed themselves to be involved in a process of evolution and change. This "nesting" occurred in myriad ways and forms at different levels of the dialectic relationship between child and literacy environment. It was both an impetus for change and a result of growth.

According to Winter (1966) and Bronfenbrenner (1979), the basis or foundation of the dialectic of man in relation with environment is the two-person system or dyad. The Shared Book Experience, which is a manifestation of the dyad as a working unit, was an ideal context from which to study the three children's constructs of reading in relation to their literacy environments. One could study this nesting of recursive and spontaneous elements as they were taking place, in relation to the three children's development as they were becoming independent readers.

The Home Microsystems

Descriptions of Gordon's, Brenda's, and Michael's home environments are followed by a discussion of the teacher's home life. The teacher's home was included because it is one of the exosystems that surrounded the three children's school experiences.

All three children seemed to have had years of positive experiences with reading in the home before they began school. Gordon's mother, Janice, read stories aloud to her children when she was pregnant. Another time when they read a great deal was when Gordon was being toilet trained. Their usual time for reading stories was around 4:30 in the afternoon, just before the mother prepared supper. Brenda's mother Caroline, had been reading to Brenda since she was about a year old. She began with labelling and then progressed to reading stories with her on a regular basis. Their favorite time for reading was just before bedtime. Michael's mother, Kristina, read stories with Michael on a spontaneous basis until he was about three and a half years old, and then the bedtime story also became a nightly ritual. After they began grade one, their parents continued to read with them in the home and the teacher read with them a great deal during school hours. All four adults were conscious of the importance of encouraging the children to develop positive attitudes toward reading.

In the home, use of space, materials, time, and purposes for engaging in literacy activities were structured implicitly. Literacy seemed to have evolved in a spontaneous manner, and was integrated with daily living. In the school environment, the teacher reflectively organized her classroom to promote literacy development. Space, materials, time and purposes were deliberately structured to promote literacy development; that is the structure was explicitly planned.

Introduction to The Family Unit

On one level of analysis, the home microsystems of the three children were very similar. All three families consisted of two parents and two children. They lived in the same neighbourhood in comparable housing. All three children were involved in structured community activities designed for their particular age group. They participated with their families in a variety of activities. For example, all three families seemed to enjoy board and card games. Most important to this study, they all shared books together on a regular basis. On another level of analysis, however, a diversity of experience was evident among the three homes which contributed an unique element to the children's literacy environments.

Gordon: Gordon lived in a three bedroom bungalow in a well established, middle class neighbourhood, with his nine-year-old brother, Trevor, his mother, Janice, and his father, John. His mother was trained as a forestry technologist but at present was working half days as a teacher's aide for exceptional children. His father was a technologist in the civil service.

Gordon's father read the newspaper on a regular basis. Both his mother and father read the Reader's Digest. His brother was an avid reader who enjoyed school activities.

Gordon's mother described herself as a very slow reader who had had a great deal of difficuty with reading in school. She felt that it took her "three times as long" to read a book as an average reader. Janice explained that a breakthrough for her reading occurred when she began reading with her children. She read their stories over and over until she had memorized them.

Gordon enjoyed "rough and tumble" games with his brother and his friends, outside and down in the basement. He went toboganning, skating, and snowballing with his family. He attended a Beaver group while his brother attended a Cubs group.

Gordon and his dad were up regularly at 6:00 in the morning. They played cards together and read stories before breakfast. He and his brother played with his dad's real saws, hammer and pliers down in the basement. Gordon and his brother helped his mother, Janice, make cookies.

At the time of the data collection, the front room was decorated for Christmas with homemade as well as store-bought decorations. Gordon seemed particularly proud of the snowscene, displayed prominently on the floor against one wall. He demonstrated how Kermit the frog could slide down the ski hill on skis. Christmas decorating was a family affair.

Gordon enjoyed watching cartoons and nature shows on TV. A few days before the interviews he had watched a show about a lion that he had really enjoyed.

Gordon told the researcher that he enjoyed playing card games with his mom, dad and brother. The family tried to have a family card night at least once a month. A lot of the games involved math skills like computation. The family played children's "Scrabble" where the object of the game is to copy the letters to make a word.

Brenda: Brenda lived in a medium-sized single family dwelling in a residential area, two blocks from a main thoroughfare, with her four and a half year old sister Katrina, her mother Caroline, and her father, Bill. Her mother had a high school education. At the time of the study she was not working outside the home. Brenda's mother felt that it was very important for her to be home with the children when they were young. She explained that she took Brenda and her sister "everywhere" with her. Her father worked shiftwork at one of the industrial plants near the city. Consequently, during Brenda's waking hours, he was often absent.

Brenda's father read the newspaper and aviation magazines. Her mother read magazines like National Geographic, Farm Women, Better Homes and Gardens, and various craft magazines, on a regular basis. She occasionally read light novels. Recently, she had read a psychological article which she found very interesting although the vocabulary was rather technical. "It took me a long time to read it, but I was determined to understand it." Brenda's younger sister, Katrina, enjoyed literacy activities, although she was not yet an independent reader.

Brenda took figure skating lessons. During unstructured time, Brenda enjoyed playing outside with friends and her sister, Katrina. Indoors, she "played school" with her friends and Katrina. According to her mother, Brenda and her sister were always drawing and coloring. On one visit to the home, the two children were involved in painting at the kitchen table. The mother showed the researcher her birthday present which Brenda and a friend had made. It consisted of stories and drawings, wrapped with a card. Brenda and her sister owned several workbooks and scribblers that involved traditional school activities. Brenda played card games like "Old Maid", "Donkey", "Crazy Eights", "Care Bears", "Strawberry Shortcake", "Snakes and Ladders", with her family.

Cartoons were Brenda's favorite type of TV. She explained that she liked to watch Fred Flintstone on TV because it's funny. She liked spooky shows like "The

Raccoons", "Ghostbusters". She enjoyed watching "Pound Puppies", and "The Smurfs".

Michael: Michael lived in a medium-sized, single family dwelling in a quiet, middle class residential area with his four-year-old sister Evelyn, his mother Kristina, and his father, Henry. His mother was a registered nurse but at the time of the study, was not working outside the home. As a nurse, Kristina preferred to work with adults rather than young children. His father was a college instructor. Since September, his grandparents had been living in the basement, but during the Christmas holidays, they planned to move to another city. For this period of time, Michael had the benefit of two additional experienced readers in his home.

Michael's mother sometimes read "a whole stack of books". She would read after the children were in bed and occasionally she would stay up until two o'clock in the morning to complete a novel. At other times, she wouldn't look at a book for several months. Michael's father regularly brought his work home from the college. He also read the Bible and prepared material for church. Michael's younger sister Evelyn, like Brenda's sister Katrina, enjoyed literacy activities although she was not yet able to read.

The winter that the study took place, Michael was enjoying skating and tobogganing with his family and was playing outside in the snow. In the summer he went for bike rides with his dad. He played board games with his whole family, helped his mom cook dinner and was planning to help his dad build a new doghouse in the summer. He belonged to a Cubs group at his church.

In the morning before school, Michael sometimes watched Sesame Street. Michael watched the "Flintstones" and "Transformers" on TV. He had a number of transformers in his drawer in his room. Michael noted, "If there's nothing good on [TV], I just go out and play."

The three children were involved in structured activities in the community at large and they also were involved with their families in a variety of activities. In the literature review, it was noted that early and/or successful readers participated fully in family life.

All three children played games with other family members on a regular basis. Mead (1934) described a progression from dyadic interaction, to play, to games. In this progression, the child becomes increasingly able to abstract from the present situation and to internalize the roles of self and other. It is possible that in playing games with their children, the adults unknowingly were preparing their children for the school environment by encouraging them to abstract from their present situation. In this sense, they were providing a recursive link to the school which according to Vygotsky (1978) and Wells (1983) characteristically tends to encourage abstraction from the immediate situation.

Family members modelled reading behaviors, although the frequency and the purposes for reading varied. In the interviews, all three parents and the teacher described experiences with books in terms this "fusion of horizons" (Ricoeur, 1976). The teacher explained that she "participated" in the life of a book. Caroline explained that she was "taken to another world". Gordon came closest of the three children in describing this special experience with books, "It's exciting. It's an adventure." This participation or experiencing is a very important aspect of reading in the narrative mode and it seems to be an important aspect of the Shared Book Experience.

Parents provided materials and allowed space and time for personal uses of literacy. Explicit, consistent routines, like bedtime, and community activities, and provided a type of scaffolding within which the children could engage in literacy activities as they desired. The home literacy environnments of the three children were structured on an implicit level, embedded within the fabric of daily living.

Even though there were similarities among the three homes, the actual experiences which these three children would bring with them into the school environment were unique. Because young children's thinking is more tied to specific contexts than adults' thought (Donaldson, 1978), this would be a very important consideration.

Discipline in the home. The three homes differed in the ways in which the children were disciplined. The manner in which the parents fostered their children's growth toward independence, or the power structure within the homes varied.

Michael's mother had guidelines for behavior, like going to bed at a specific time, but within those guidelines, Michael moved quite freely. His mother seemed to encourage Michael to be independent and at the same time ~~she allowed him room~~ to grow into literacy activities on his own time. For example, Michael's mother explained that she bought Michael a phonics workbook a while ago but he wasn't interested in it. She explained that she didn't force him to work in it. Recently, on his own initiative, he worked in it until he had finished the book. With regard to school activities, she seemed to want him to emulate adult models in school-related activities; she wanted him to accomplish activities without errors.

Brenda's mother wanted to be there for her daughter, to prevent her daughter from making mistakes. Unlike Michael's mother, she seemed to want to make the links for her daughter to smooth her way. She felt that she wasn't ready for phonics and so didn't push her. Brenda's mother said that she was very exacting with Brenda but that she wasn't quite as demanding with her second daughter.

Gordon's mother didn't want her children to have the difficulties in school that she had had. She was more authoritarian than the other two parents, although she disciplined in a jocular, teasing manner. Her role as teacher's aide, by her own admission, was also enacted in an authoritarian manner.

Gordon's mother encouraged her children to be responsible. She had decided that the two boys would not be involved in any other activities for the year because they both tended to want to join activities like bowling and then they quit before the session was completed because they would rather watch Saturday morning cartoons. Next year, if the boys decided to join something, they would be allowed to participate if they promised to go of their own volition, without arguments.

It can be seen that the relations between the three children and their parents were different in the nature of the power structure. The ways in which parents scaffolded their children's activities toward independence varied.

Shared book experiences and the family unit. In the home, routine behaviors, or familiar ways of living within the family, provided a familiar context within which specific reading events occurred. Such routines or rituals, recursive and implicit in nature, seemed to evolve gradually through repeated occurrences of Shared Book Experiences.

All three children read frequently and regularly with a parent and their brother or sister. To all three families, reading books together was a happy, comfortable occasion.

The following description highlights Michael's Shared Book Experiences but is also representative of the others. Kristen, Michael's mother, explained that Michael loved stories: "We usually set a limit of one but he would bring five or six." Typically, Michael, his younger sister Evelyn, and a parent read together. Story sessions took place on the couch in the living room. When Michael was reading, he held the book and sat in the middle. When his mom was reading, she held the book and sat in the middle. All three families shared books in a similar manner. Sharing books was a family activity involving a parent and both children.

A difference among the three homes was the space in which Shared Book Experiences took place. In Michael's home, Shared Book Experiences took place in the living room, which was a communal, shared space. In Brenda's home, the usual place alternated between Brenda's bedroom which was her personal space and her sister's bedroom. Brenda indicated that she felt uncomfortable in her sister's room. Gordon, his mother and brother read together in his bedroom.

The three children identified two distinct types of reading patterns. One type of pattern occurred when the parents dominated the interaction. Children saw this kind of activity as parents reading "to them." The other type of pattern occurred when children dominated the interaction. Here, the children explained that they were reading "with" their parents. Tapes of Shared Book Experiences in the home were representative of the second type of pattern.

Recursive aspects of Shared Book Experiences in the home which seemed to support the children's reading were rituals or routines, positive feelings, and frequency of occurrences.

The teacher: Nancy lived in the same subdivision as the three students. She was married but had no children. Her job seemed to be a very important part of her life.

Nancy had a dog and an aquarium full of fish. She liked to sew and sold cosmetics out of her home. After school, she was involved in helping adults learn to read within the Write Break Program.

> Well, I'm involved with Write Break so I come across ...adults who are not good readers,... who are barely literate.... [It seems that] a lot of them ... have real gaps in their education where they've moved around a lot. But the major cause I would say is that these adults never read and they started off reading not even understanding what the reading process was...they are not bearing in mind that reading is language and it has to make sense.

Nancy was very interested in teaching and particularly in reading. To Nancy, reading was a very important part of one's life.

> I just can't understand how anyone can survive without being able to read or spending some time reading. I find it so enjoyable ....I really feel sorry for people who reach adulthood and are still poor readers - that don't like reading and have to find other things to occupy their time. I guess because of my attitudes towards reading; ... I translate that enjoyment to the kids. So, to me, they are all going to grow up to be readers ... I really have difficulty understanding how people can grow into adulthood and not be a reader.

Even though she emphasized the importance of practice or mastery, of reading as a skill, she insisted that the most important aspect of reading was the meaning which reading has for the individual. For example, when comparing television to reading, she explained that in reading, "The way I picture a character in a story will be totally different from what you picture the character." On TV, "You are not really given that opportunity to make your own interpretations or comprehension will be more standard." Nancy acknowledged that individual interpretation and background knowledge play a role in reading comprehension. Reading seemed to play a more prominent role in Nancy's life than in lives of all of the parents except Michael's father.

Use of Space and Materials

Literacy artifacts were observed throughout the four houses. Again, although there were similarities among the microsystems, each situation was unique.

Gordon: In the front room there was a wildlife encyclopedia, sitting on a low bookshelf. Trevor explained that the family had used it more when it was new than they did at present.

Gordon had a room to himself. On the floor in the closet, stood a low bookshelf with a large collection of picture books jammed into it. Most of the books were handed down from his brother. The books were geared to Gordon's level of interest and most appeared to be at or a little above his instructional reading level. Papers and writing materials were strewn about among toys and articles of clothing. Gordon's bed was a fascinating red construction which contained a nook at the foot where he, his mother and his brother usually read together.

On special occasions, his mother would buy puzzle books, games books, and other writing materials. She picked up the "classics" which she felt the boys would enjoy eventually. However, no one in Gordon's family read them at present.

Brenda: Brenda had a room to herself. A record player sat by the window. The record "Baby Beluga" by Raffi was placed in a night-table by her bed along with a Care Bear library book she'd borrowed from the school library. On the other side of the bed stood a low bookshelf on which was placed a scribbler and some writing paper. Brenda had a shelf of books placed above her reach in her bedroom closet; the titles of many were prominently displayed so that she could see them as she sat in her bed if the closet door was open. The collection included "Fern Hollow" books, an anthology of fairy tales, the complete set of Mercer Mayer books, Little Golden Books like "Santa's Toy Shop", a book of nursery rhymnes, and store-bought workbooks. Her mother would take the books down when Brenda asked for them.

Brenda, her sister and her mother bought new books periodically when they were out shopping. Caroline was concerned about buying "good books" for her children. She looked for books by author as well as title.

Michael: Michael had a room to himself. In his room stood a low bookshelf containing a Bible, a set of Childcraft, two National Geographic books about penguins and bears, an adult version of A.A.Milne's writings, numerous picture books and xeroxed pattern books made in school. His books were at eye level and readily accessible.

Michael told the researcher that he had a 'Do Not Disturb' sign which he could hang on the outside of his door if he didn't want to be disturbed. He also made a 'Yes You Can Disturb' sign which he could hang up as well. Michael explained, "When I want to read by myself, I just go to a place where nobody can bother me, like my bedroom. And I start reading." This seemed to be a general feeling of all subjects, that you needed a quiet, solitary place to read and each found his or her bedroom to be this quiet, solitary place. In their bedrooms, literacy materials was readily available.

The Teacher: Books and school materials were apparent throughout the house. Most of her children's books were housed in her classroom at school.

In all of the homes, a rich variety of literacy materials were readily available. The three children had spaces which they could call their own, where they could and did engage in literacy activities, both with others and independently. The children varied in their specific interests, in the specific books that they read, and in the literacy activities in which they engaged.

Time

All three children lived in homes where literacy was important; it was, however, balanced with other activities. Reading seemed to dominate the teacher's home life.

It was evident from the interviews that in the home environment, all three children were actively involved in reading books, both with others and on their own. Time was made available for involvement in literacy activities. Michael and Brenda both explained that they read on their own initiative. Gordon was less clear on the subject. Gordon explained that he read by himself "sometimes a little, sometimes a lot." He read before breakfast with his Dad or alone in his bedroom. Brenda read "at lunch, after school, after supper." Michael talked about going to bed at six o'clock and reading until seven o'clock. However, reading was not an obsession to Michael. "Sometimes I get tired of reading so I say I'll go and do something else." Nancy, the teacher, explained that "just about everybody in our family reads. We are all readers." When asked how she spends her leisure time, she responded. "Reading. It's terrible. It's almost all I do."

All subjects spent substantial time reading; some more than others. The teacher's reading in her home was a solitary activity while the children's experiences were social, although all three did engage in independent literacy activities.

Purposes for Reading

All three children discussed practise as a very important reason for reading. In addition, the three children were involved in literacy activities in the home for a variety of purposes.

Gordon: Gordon wrote a letter to Santa Claus. He helped his mom write in Christmas cards and address the envelopes. He copied his father's cursive writing, but he "didn't have the foggiest idea" what it said. In addition to these specific activities, Gordon "played" with pencil and paper, writing out words that he knew, and letters of the alphabet. He also drew designs.

Brenda: Brenda explained, "I like stories that have monsters, people." She really enjoyed characters in stories. She also enjoyed playing school. Both at home and at school, she read instructions in her workbooks. "I like workbooks that you can work in." She had a special scribbler in which she practised the letters of the alphabet, wrote stories and drew pictures. She wrote stories and drew pictures for presents. Brenda wrote lists of names in her scribbler or on a piece of paper and she taped these to her bedroom door. While playing card games such as "Old Maid", she read the labels on the cards.

Michael: Michael described learning content as another purpose for reading in the home although he didn't mention this purpose in relation to the school.

> RESEARCHER AND MICHAEL: Looking at a National Geographic book on penguins in Michael's room.
> MICHAEL: These two are mine. The other ones are my sister's books. This one tells you all the kinds of penguins that there are. And then they show you all the things. There's a neat picture. First they have fur and then their fur goes away and then they're black and white. It's really neat.

Why does Michael read? Besides practising, Michael described a number of purposes for reading. He helped his mother cook and followed instructions while cooking. He made bowls out of playdough, using the description in the Childcraft encyclopedia. He read to learn about penguins and other animals and studied dinosaurs. He also copied pages from the Childcraft Encyclopedia "for fun."

The three homes were comparable to those of children who could read independently before they began grade one. However, there was not quite as much emphasis on literacy in that activities that correlated with early reading development (Manning and Manning, 1984) were not as prominent in the lives of these children as in the homes of early readers. The teacher's home environment was more similar to the homes of early readers.

Teacher: Nancy made a distinction between reading fiction and her professional reading. Reading novels were for enjoyment, while she read professional journals only for information. In other words, she distinguished very clearly between Rosenblatt's (1978) "efferent" and "afferent" categories of reading. At home, Nancy preferred fiction, like light "happily ever after" stories, mysteries, and spy novels. She read professsional journals, like Language Arts, on a regular basis. It is very possible that articles which she read would influence her view of reading.

Purposes for literacy in the homes tended to be pragmatic; the children were 'learning by doing'. However, all three homes explicitly encouraged the children's involvement in school related activities. For example, during one visit to Michael's home, he was writing the numbers from one to one hundred on a piece of paper. This was his idea, but his mother encouraged him through her interest and support.

In the school on the other hand, literacy activities tended to be more abstract, possibly because they were intended for a broader range of contexts. This is the distinction made by Heath (1983) between use, "what individuals can do with literacy skills", and function "what literacy can do for individuals" (p. 123). Heath observed that the school by its very nature was more concerned with function than use. The teacher, aware of these differences between the home and the school, endeavored to enhance the transfer to out of school experiences. Because both home and school endeavored to accommodate the other environment, links were established for the children between the two microsystems. This will be discussed more fully in the next sections.

Ecological Transition: Home to Grade One

At the time of the study, the three children were participating in an ecological transition from home to school. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), "an ecological transition sets the stage both for the occurrence and the systematic study of developmental phenomena" because it is "a joint function of biological changes and altered environmental circumstances" (p. 27). Because the three children were adjusting to changes in their environments, they were open, vulnerable to change, and thus there was tremendous potential for development as the three children adapted to the new situation; as they endeavored to create order out of the unfamiliarity in which they found themselves. There was reciprocity in the interaction between home and school in that there was potential for changes in both the home and school environments as a result of the children's involvement in a new setting. The children seemed to be constructing new roles for themselves as a result of the changes in their environment. An analysis of the data was facilitated when this ecological transition was viewed on different levels.

The Macrosystem

Macrosystem phenomena are very powerful, the ramifications far-reaching, because the paradigm is shared by the entire community; it is held within the collective consciousness of a society's members. Underlying the structural and dynamic interrelationships that emerged from the data, two major expectations appeared to exist that seemed to provide an impetus for the children's development: becoming a learner in the formal sense and becoming an independent reader. In the minds of all subjects, including the parents and the teacher, these two expectations appeared to be separate but interrelated. They were united in that all three children and their caregivers discussed their experiences with learning to read in relation to the primary grades, and separated in that reading existed outside of the school, to a greater or lesser degree, for all subjects. With relation to reading, there seemed to be some sort of hidden agenda or tacit understanding, upon which all subjects agreed, about what children should be doing once they entered grade one.

At a macrosystem level, the importance of literacy in our society is evident in the emphasis on education in the workplace and in programs designed to help illiterates. Donaldson (1978) stated, "I believe that the early mastery of reading is even more important than it is commonly taken to be" (p. 98). This emphasis on literacy seemed to set up _implicit_ social expectations about the importance of reading. All of the subjects emphasized the significant place reading should hold in the children's lives, not only in the present, but in their children's future. In response to the question, "Do you think reading is important?", the teacher explained, "So it's the key to all future learning." This response was representative of all subjects. This shared, tacit agreement on the value of literacy appeared to be a powerful, recursive force which seemed to be driving Gordon, Brenda and Michael to become independent readers; it also encouraged the adults to support their efforts.

The Mesosystem

Structuring at the mesosystem level involved networks of connections between the home and the school. The school provided many opportunites for communication. Parents were kept informed of school activities and were encouraged to participate. Because all three parents regularly volunteered in the school, they were able to become familiar with what was taking place and to talk to their children about school experiences. All three parents and their children provided evidence that they talked to each other about their school experiences. Michael's mother helped in the school library, while Brenda's and Gordon's mothers helped regularly in the classroom.

Bronfenbrenner (1986a, 1986b), emphasized the importance of links or connections between the home and the school to healthy development. Because the three mothers participated in the school environment, they were in a position to make mesosystem connections for their children and to elaborate on their children's connections which might arise spontaneously in everyday activities. The children were not solely dependent upon their own connections. In contrast to these children, Bronfenbrenner explained, mesosystem connections for many children consist solely of what they connect or link; there is not the support or scaffolding from adults either in the home or in the school.

A comparison was made of Shared Book Experiences in the home and in the school, both in whole group/teacher interactions and in child/adult dyads. The researcher analyzed home data before the school data. However, it was only when the school Shared Book Experiences were used as a base from which to view the other information, that a more complete picture of what was taking place began to form. It was then that an ecology of the whole before the parts made sense and could be analyzed. This is an indication that in mesosystem interaction between home and school literacy environments, the school was a very influential partner. All three parents were receptive or open to influences from the school. Both parents and teacher saw the school as the authority on education, one that possessed knowledge and expertise about reading. There was general, tacit agreement that the role of the parents was to support what took place in the school. The teacher explained:

> Ideally, every child should be read to from birth, but if they've arrived at school age and they are having difficulty, I think the best thing parents can do is just read to them. Read with them, talk about reading, talk about stories and just try to fill in those gaps.

The teacher encouraged children to take books from the classroom home. Usually she didn't control which books were taken home but if she felt that certain children needed a lot of practise she noted:

> I'll recommend they take this particular book home. If I notice they're not taking one home regularly, I remind them. Or if they always take home the same type.

The three parents involved in this study were aware of what was going on in the school; they supported their children and the teacher, and they communicated with the teacher about positive effects that the children's school experiences were having on their development at home. For example, Brenda's mother told the teacher how much Brenda enjoyed school and how much she was learning. This was important for the teacher to know because Brenda was often reticent to express what she knew in the classroom environment.

School activities were brought into the home by both parents and children. For example, all three children brought papers and books home from school, and these were discussed with the parents. Brenda's mother was encouraging her to learn Just Grandma and Me, by Mercer Mayer, by heart so that she could read it in school. This was something that the teacher had initiated and encouraged.

The teacher communicated daily with the home through notices that were printed on the board every morning with the help of the children. These were copied and sent home each night. These communications included news which the children had brought from home as well as news of happenings in the school. For example, Gordon told the class that he was going to be moving in the summer. At another time, Brenda told everyone that she had visited a mink farm. The teacher gave the parents information about the Christmas Concert.

In addition to the notices, the teacher communicated regularly with the parents, both formally and informally, explaining her reading program, and making suggestions about how best the parents could help their children. There were strong connections between the home and the school in all three children's mesosystems and these connections were not one-sided. Both parents and teacher worked at establishing and maintaining them. However, there was a subtle difference in the nature of the connections. Brenda's and Gordon's parents tended to take the initiative in communications between home and school, while Michael was more verbal than Gordon and Brenda in making his own mesosystem connections.

In comparing discipline in the school and the home, the teacher's relationships with the children in her class were similar to Michael's home. Michael's mother allowed him to make his own decisions within the parameters or guidelines that she set. The teacher's classroom was organized in a similar manner. Both Michael's mother and the teacher allowed and encouraged Michael to take risks. This was something that the teacher felt was very important to learning to read. The teacher explained,

> If you're a really good risk taker, that's a big bonus .... I think personality has so much to do with learning to read. Language skills and experience with books [are very important], but personality really comes into play."

Risk-taking is an indication that the child feels comfortable in his surroundings and is confident in his abilities. A child who will take risks feels comfortable about trying new things.

Shared book experiences: home and school. During Shared Book Experiences, the teacher was more preoccupied than the parents with reading processes at a metacognitive level. She explained, "You have to make them aware of everything that you do as a reader and things they do."

She was consciously aware of how she was leading the children to develop in reading. She was concerned with abstracting and generalizing from the present situation in a variety of ways. For example, at the end of one reading event, she directly discussed how the children should learn to read:

> Teacher: How do you learn to read?
> Several children: Try hard.
> Teacher: Think of the story and it's not hard. Kinsey?
> Kinsey: Read the words and look at the pictures.

Note that she emphasized thinking about the meaning as well as about words and looking at pictures. In the three homes, there were no comparable examples in the recordings of Shared Book Experiences.

During Shared Book Experiences, all three parents tried to interact with their children like the teacher had suggested. This ensured a degree of consistency between the children's experiences in the home and in the school.

Development and shared book experiences. There was evidence that the nature of Shared Book Experiences had changed since the children began school. The following transcription, involving Kristina, Michael's mother, and the researcher, describes how the frequency of the interactions had increased.

> Researcher: Have the book sessions changed since Michael started school?
> Kristina: No - not besides that fact that he reads his books. Well, maybe they have in that we do it more often - like over the summer we kind of slacked off with the book reading, but they probably have increased since September started.

In this same discussion, Kristina explained how Michael was changing the dyadic relation as he became a reader. He was becoming a more active participant.

> Researcher: How about his participation and yours in the story session - has it changed at all since before he started school and now?
> Kristina: Well, he's more involved with - I think when hewas younger he would just sit there and be mesmerized by the material you are reading and now he's more verbal, printing things out and pointing words out and stuff like that.
> Researcher: Now he talks a lot more with you than he used to do? Is that since kindergarten or grade one?
> Kristina: I've noticed it more since he started to read. Well, not as far as the pictures go but as far as the words go, he'll tell me - well I know that word, as we're reading.

Janice, Gordon's mother, also noted that Gordon was more actively involved since he began grade one.

The ecological transition to grade one seemed to bring about changes both in the home and in the parent's and children's perceptions of the school. Reading was now strongly associated with the institution of the school. In allowing themselves to be open to the school's influence, the three family units provided strong connections of support within which the three children's preschool literacy experiences could be related to the new situation. In addition, the willingness of the teacher to share her insights about reading with the children afforded the opportunity for greater continuity between what took place in the home and in the school for each of the three children than would have otherwise been possible.

The School Microsystem

A description of the grade one classroom was provided in Chapter Three. The following discussion complements that information.

Use of Time

In the school, all three children explained that the only time they felt they read on their own was during Shared Reading Time. Children were allowed the freedom to choose their own books and to read on their own or with a partner. This was the most comparable activity to independent reading in the home environment and as such was an important link to the children's home experiences. The teacher explained this Shared Reading Time as evolving from a more social experience to a more individual, internalized experience, "Silent Reading

Time". "Except we haven't been really doing any silent reading but sort of shared reading." In the beginning, this independent reading time was a social experience.

At the beginning of the year, the teacher shared books with the children about six times a day. At the time of this study, they would usually read one after recess in the morning, after lunch, and sometime before the end of the day.

The grade one classroom was influenced by activities which involved the school as a whole. Classroom activities were set aside when the children became involved in activities involving the whole school. When asked if the children read on their own every day, the teacher replied, "No - it was every day but it just seems, boy, in the last month or so there have been so many things going on that I am not even getting to my journals every day as well as the other writing activity we do." It seemed that activities like school concerts and so on, cut down on the amount of time that children were involved in literacy activities in school. As special holidays, like Christmas, approached, this could be predicted.

Another interruption involved activities organized by outside agencies like the Health Unit. On one occasion during the data gathering week, the children were called out to have their tuberculosis shots. While waiting for everyone to come back into the room and get settled, the teacher used this opportunity as a free reading time. The researcher noted what was taking place.

> At first the children milled around, and then gradually they settled to their chosen activity. Kinsey, Annie, and Ken, were looking at books on the heat register; George was reading a book on the teacher's chair. Then, Annie selected "The Gingerbread Man" and settled down to read. In the story corner, Melissa was working in a binder, Michael was reading from a binder, and close by, Benton and Don were reading books. Meanwhile, Gordon was sitting at a table reading a Bill Peet book, "Fly Home Fly" which contained rather difficult words with little repetition. He was attending to the print. He read, "Now-now-that now-that." He was having difficulty with the words. Gordon commented to himself, "I'm just going to look at the pictures. It's funny how artists can draw so many good pictures." He proceeded to tell the story to himself, as he interpreted it through the pictures.
>
> Back in the story corner, Cody was sitting on the floor, looking at pictures in a book. Don had abandonned his book and now he, like Kelsey, was working in a binder. Evan, binder on his lap, was staring into space. Michael began to sing Baby Beluga, louder at first, and then less audibly, while looking at the print in the binder. Cody put his book away and was just sitting.
>
> Brenda came into the classroom and began talking with Sheena. Then she picked up a book by Bill Peet, and began to look at it.

The teacher took advantage of the spontaneous interruption and encouraged individuals to explore literacy activities in their own way; to shape their own environment.

Use of Space

The necessity of grouping larger numbers of children was one of the major differences between home and school. In this classroom, the children were involved in whole groups, small groups, dyadic relations with an adult, and dyadic relations with a partner of the same age and similar reading ability. Grouping in school was arranged in a manner which seemed to support the children's literacy development. Logically, it would seem that the dyadic relations would be closest to the home situation, but all three children emphasized that the whole group situation was more comfortable because it involved group support or cooperation in reading. In his interview, Michael noted a difference between reading with the whole group and reading with a partner. When he read with a partner, he explained:

> We take turns and then I read ...and if I don't know what a word is I have to figure it out. When we're reading with a whole class then when we come to a word that nobody knows, we all have to think what it is.

Holdaway (1978) explained:

> "the great advantage of unison practice preceding individual performance lies in the provision for gradual approximation towards competence without personal embarrassment" (p. 129).

In Shared Book Experiences that involved the large group, a range of zones of proximal development were accommodated. Thus, for different children in the whole group situation, the interaction took place at different places within and perhaps outside the Zone of Proximal Development. It is probable that for Michael the discussion sometimes was concerned with actualized development and thus with reinforcement of what he had already internalized. He was able to master what he had internalized. Gordon and Brenda seemed to be operating quite comfortably within the Zone during whole group sessions. Gordon and Brenda were being challenged within their capabilities. Gordon explained that at school, people helped him sometimes. When he would see a word that he didn't know, he'd say it after the others. Then, he'd know more words. Gordon was learning to read within a social situation.

The children and the teacher always read together at a fluent pace but the teacher encouraged the children to stay together, to cooperate. "Let's try that line. See if we can stay all together."

> Teacher: Why do we do this Cody? (indicating her pointer) Because we want to stay together so we sound like one voice almost.
> Child: Yeah - a giant voice.

The teacher reinforced cooperative reading not only by verbal admonitions but by supporting the reading when it was breaking down.

> Whole Group: (echoing each other) Jule Ann was standing in the sunshine in her
> Teacher and Whole Group: raincoat getting very hot. She pulled back her

Whole Group: (simultaneously) raincoat
coat
hood
Teacher: hood
Teacher and Whole Group: Nothing happened. She took off her raincoat.

In the first utterance, the whole group was not reading in unison which indicates that some of the children were having difficulty "reading" that part of the story, even though the reading hadn't broken down altogether. At this point, the teacher read with the children, supporting the less able. Then, there were several different suggestions for a word which made a slight meaning change to the story. The teacher supported the correct response, "hood", and finally, the whole group and the teacher completed the page together.

In the preceding example, it is apparent that not only the teacher but other children supported the reading. Like the children had explained during interviews, classmates as well as the teacher were guiding the flow of the interaction. The children as well as the teacher were active participants during Shared Book Experiences.

Even though the teacher intended Shared Book Experiences to be a cooperative venture, Michael introduced a competitive aspect into the activity. Michael explained that during whole group reading session, he and Ken had a little game.

Michael: Whoever answers the most wins.

> Researcher: Do you ever talk about it or is it just a game that you both know?
> Michael: Me and Ken just talk about it.

The teacher tended to gage the pace of the Shared Book Experiences according to the two most vocal children: Michael and Ken. These children seemed to be the most advanced in literacy. This might have encouraged Michael's competitive attitude. The teacher would change the pace if she could see that the others were lagging behind too much. Holdaway (1978) discussed the negative effects of competition, explaining that in a competitive atmosphere, the high achievers would be rewarded while the majority would not receive the same positive feedback and those having the most difficulty would be "subjected to putative feedback" (p. 16). Children operating at the upper end of the Zone of Proximal Feedback would be rewarded more because they were mastering what they already had learned, while children operating within the Zone would be rewarded less often because they were being challenged to do more than they could on their own. Children whose constructs of reading were less advanced than the others, who were operating outside of the Zone of Proximal Development, would experience fewer successful experiences.

During Shared Book Experiences with the whole group, the children sat on the floor in a special area designated the "story corner". The teacher chose the books. She held them up so that the children could see the pictures and possibly the words.

> Researcher: So, once the book is chosen you hold the book up so the kids can see the pictures at all times?
>
> Teacher: Yes, and the print...it seems to keep them more involved and they are listening. And then some of the kids in a lot of the books are following the print. And if it's a book of any reasonable size print I'll use my pointer -it's so skinny and doesn't interfere with the picture or anything - just so that they are aware that I am reading that print and can follow along with their eyes.

The teacher didn't always use the pointer, just if she felt that the children could follow along or if there was a "particular little dynamic spot in the book." This pointing structured the children's processing of print in a number of ways. It encouraged them to follow print with their eyes in a left to right progression. The children could follow the flow of the language as the group was reading. The children were encouraged to attend to repetitive aspects of the print and to important aspects of the story.

Shared Book Experiences that involved the teacher and the whole group developed as the year progressed and as children became more familiar with specific books. The teacher explained that books were read again and again, as long as the children continued to enjoy a particular book. In this way a repertoire of familiar books was built.

At the beginning of the year, the teacher taught the children how to interact with her as she read books, in a manner similar to that which developed spontaneously in the home environment as described by Doake, (1981). She paused to allow the children to complete a word or phrase. She encouraged the children to read along with her in a cooperative manner.

Because Doake focussed on the child, he did not record what the adult did as the child became more proficient. In this study, as the group gained more control of the reading, as they memorized larger and larger chunks of text, the teacher assumed a less prominent role. She allowed the children to take more and more control of the reading. When the reading began to break down, she encouraged them to keep the flow of the text going by reading cooperatively with them and echoing parts of the text which were key clues to the macrostructure of the story.

This procedure had to be repeated when the teacher introduced a new book or re-presented a book which had not been read for a while. At first, the teacher concentrated on establishing routine behaviors like looking at the pictures, reading cooperatively by staying together, following the pointer. In the first taped session of a familiar book, Mud Puddle, for example, the teacher spent a considerable amount of time encouraging the children to read cooperatively. It had been a while since they had last read the book and they seemed to have forgotten it. In the second session, when the book was more familiar, the children shouldered more of the responsibility for keeping the flow of the reading going. When some children assumed control of the microprocessing, the teacher was able to spend more time dealing with higher level reading processes like elaboration and macroprocessing. A comparison of two successive readings of the same text taped during the week of data collection follows:

In the first reading of Mud Puddle by Robert Munsch, the teacher encouraged the children to think of the story, and about what would happen next, before she turned the page. After she had turned the page, she told the children to begin reading. Then, she read cooperatively with the children. The ^ indicates pauses:

Mud Puddle, first reading

Teacher: Ok. Here we go. Let's read it.

Teacher and Whole Group: Jule Ann put on a clean new shirt ^ and buttoned it up the front. She put on clean new pants ^ and buttoned them up the front. Then she looked out the back door. (Teacher's voice getting soft and mysterious. Kids following her lead)

Teacher: That's a little different, isn't it?"

The teacher indicated by the tone of her voice and her comment, "That's a little different, isn't it?" that a change of pattern had taken place. The discussion remained at a rather implicit level, perhaps because both teacher and children were concentrating on keeping the flow of reading going. Fluency was explicit because it was not yet well established. The comment, being at an implicit level, did not draw too much attention away from the microprocessing of the text.

In the second reading, the children assumed more control. They kept the flow going from one page to the next. The children read on their own and the teacher only supported them when the reading began to break down, or to emphasize an important phrase. Notice below how she echoed the correct response and then left the children to complete the phrase. Then she read the next section cooperatively.

In the second reading of the same text, the teacher discussed the change in pattern on a more explicit level. She encouraged the children to link the present story event to the previous one as they were reading:

Mud Puddle, second reading

Whole Group: Jule Ann put on a clean new shirt and buttoned it up the front.
Child: She put on
Whole Group: (almost simultaneously) She put on clean new pants and buttoned them up the front. Then she walked out
Child: looked outside (said simultaneously with word "out")
Teacher: Yes. Then she looked out the
Whole Group: (at same time) looked out the back door.
Teacher and Whole Group: She couldn't see a mud puddle anywhere. So she walked outside and sat down in her sand box
a sand box. (echoing)
Teacher: sand box.
Several Children: and box (echoing)

Child: box
Teacher: Yes. That's right. This is the second time. First time she went out she sat down under the
Child: apple tree.
Teacher: ple tree. This time she sat ^ down in her ^
Child: sand box.
Teacher: and box. Good.

In both previous examples, after the teacher commented on the text, the group continued to read the story. In the first reading the teacher and the group read together. Then the teacher focussed on microprocessing, encouraging the children to look at the words as they were reading. She allowed them to continue on their own but completed the sentence with them. This last sentence was an important link to the next page and an emphasis on this sentence might clue the children to think of what was going to happen next. Note that some of the children assumed the lead, supporting the group:

Mud Puddle, first reading (continued)
Teacher and Whole Group: She couldn't see a mud puddle anywhere, so she walked outside and sat down in her sand box.
Teacher: Are you trying to look at the words? I know the words are small. But try.
Child: The
Child: the (echoed)
Whole Group: The (echoed)
Whole Group: The sand box was next to the house and hiding up on the ^ top ^ of the house
Teacher and Whole Group: there was a mud puddle.

In the second reading, the children resumed reading with no verbal support from the teacher and completed the page on their own. This time, instead of emphasizing the importance of the presence of the mud puddle by her tone of voice, she explicitly encouraged the children to orchestrate what they were reading with the picture of the mud puddle and with their understanding of the story. She encouraged orchestration of print and picture cues:

Mud Puddle, second reading (continued)
Whole Group: The sand box was next to the house and
hiding up on
(echoed) up on
top of the house
(almost ast) house ^ there was a
mud puddle.
Teacher: Very good. You can see him up there.

Why did the teacher feel that cooperative reading was important? She explained:

> Well, it gets them more involved. Reading is such an active thing, you can't be passive. You have to be actively involved in the process or you are not getting as much out of it. So even if they are just involved because they recognize the pattern, and have no clue about the print or whatever; just being involved and saying the sentences orally gets them much more involved and they like it too. It gives them something to do. It's not like they are sitting listening to me all the time.

In the school, the teacher intentionally encouraged the children to model adult reading. When she stopped the children to discuss aspects of text, she ensured that the flow was not lost by encouraging the children to think about previous readings of the text before they went on. The teacher often used the vocabulary of the text in her discussions to encourage memory for text. Thus, the teacher emphasized the importance of meaning as she read with the children. She also encouraged them to integrate or link various aspects of texts. In response to the question, "When a child in grade one is reading is he doing the same things as when an adult is reading? Why?" the teacher responded:

> That would really depend on how he is instructed...sometimes if they are taught to read through words in isolation and phonics then all of a sudden they'll forget all about the fluency they had before when they were pretending to read...but if they are reminded that reading is language and it has to make sense ... they'll be like an adult will be.

It was very important to the teacher that reading be meaningful to her students; that they assume ownership for their own reading. She also felt that the meaningfulness should not be forgotten even if they were focussing on other aspects of the process.

Materials, Purposes and Instructional Objectives

The teacher emphasized narrative prose, poetry, songs, like Raffi - a record that Brenda had in her home. In one of the interviews, she explained that she had not yet developed any activities which included Shared Book Experiences focusing on expository material. These activities would consist of units centred around specific themes like dinosaurs.

The teacher created a yearly plan which was both structured and flexible in nature. She explained that she tried to link one activity with another from the perspective of content or theme, author, activity, or skill. She began her yearly plans based on themes and from those themes she chose different books, skills, and activities. However, the whole day was not centred on the theme.

> Now the first book may follow the theme and then the other books are connected to that one because it's the same author or there are similarities. So you are linking things but not everything follows the theme.

She explained, "Kids would get bored to tears" if everything was linked in the same way. The teacher noted that it was important for the chidren to perceive the connectedness. She explained that "...the kids know how it's linked because we'll talk about it." We'll talk - even if it's just linked through the author and how is this book different from other things." She planned certain authors in sequence, but "...often books that I will select won't be the ones that I'd originally thought to do. But if something just happens then I think of a book and I pull it out." The teacher also planned reading processes or story structure that she would want to focus on, but "it doesn't mean I follow that to a 'T." The order wasn't important to her. This indicates that she saw reading as consisting of complex processes rather than skills hierarchies.

The teacher explained that she introduced "specific skills" through books:

> like different story types, different comprehension strategies, even I will focus on specific ... phonetic skills through material in certain books, for example, rhyming words.

The teacher approached beginning reading from the meaning and from memorizing large chunks of text. Then, she focussed on macroprocessing like story structure and elaborative processing, relating the reading to children's experiences. Her understanding of reading was conceptually-driven. Any skills which she taught had to be related to specific contexts. This is how she felt children learned. When she was reading Mud Puddle by Robert Munsch with Gordon, she tended to ignore data-driven clues like sound/symbol relationships and instead focussed on conceptually-driven clues like relating picture clues to memory for the text.

> Gordon: It ^ s ^ it ^ it ^ s ^ ^
> Teacher: Think of the mud puddle. He's up there looking down and what does it see?
> Gordon: It saw ^ Jule Ann ^ ^ sitting down in^ its ^
> Teacher: Sitting down
> Gordon: there and it ^ jumped right on her head. Sh she got completely all over muddy... (Gordon proceeded to read the entire page from memory without any further help.)

In this example, Gordon is trying to sound out the word sitting. The teacher encouraged Gordon to relate his memory for text and the picture to help him remember the text rather than scaffolding by referring to the microprocesses.

The teacher stressed the importance of reading in her classroom, "And you can use reading to teach everything or you can use everything to teach reading, whatever way you want it." This was evident in the way that her classroom was structured, in the abundance of books and other literacy materials available for the children, in the way space and time were organized, and in her verbal interactions with the children.

Thus, reading played a central role in the teacher's curriculum. She encouraged the children to make links between reading experiences. The teacher encouraged the children to model adult reading in the familiar context of Shared Book Experiences. She also advocated memorization; this enabled the children to orchestrate aspects of the reading process before they were independent readers. She emphasized narrative prose but there was potential for use of expository material as well. She charted directions in which she planned to lead the children, but was open to spontaneous elements which could change the direction of her plans.

Learning to Read in the Home and in the School

In school and at home, Michael, Brenda and Gordon were learning to read through memorization. The children were being explicitly taught in a manner which was similar to accounts of how early readers who learned on their own time at home (Clay, 1979; Doake, 1981). Michael discussed how he learned to read by this method.

> You can learn how to read them. Like listen. And then she shows the words and she reads them. OK. She shows the pictures. Then you learn words in the

> fairy tale. Like in the Little Red Hen, it goes, "Once Upon a Time", like it's a fairy tale.

All three children made similar observations about reading both in the home and in the school.

Summary

In summary, within the three children's literacy environments, both recursion and spontaneity occurred at many levels and in many forms; at the levels of the microsystem, the mesosystem, and the macrosystem; in the materials, space and time provided for pursuit of literacy activities. From the data it was very evident that the adults' beliefs, values and literacy experiences played an important role in the way their children's literacy environments were structured. The spontaneous and recursive aspects of the children's environments together created a scaffolding which provided the children with a comfortable network of relationships and experiences within which they could focus on becoming independent readers. It was predictable enough to provide a framework and yet spontensous enough not to be constraining.

Within the literacy environments described above, Gordon, Brenda and Michael were coming to know what it means to be a reader in our society. They were gradually developing constructs of themselves as readers, and in the process, becoming independent readers. They were beginning to master the conventions of print, and to develop the ability to relate what they knew about listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing. Their development was shaped by their present understanding and by their literacy experiences. In the process, they were finding different ways to use this newly acquired skill. Gordon, Michael and Brenda were personally scaffolding their own literacy experiences. In the following section, this personal scaffolding will be highlighted.

Reading: The Child's Perspective

In Section Two, the three children's expectations about their role as learner and their role as reader will be discussed. Expectations about roles seemed to be a type of internal scaffolding which enabled the three children to interact successfully with their literacy environments. Although these expectations seemed to be recursive, stabilizing influences, they were not static or fixed, but seemed to be influenced by spontaneous molar experiences or events which were unique to each child.

Roles as Learners and Readers

The children linked their role as reader with their role as learner in the school environment. All three children felt that they had learned to read when they began grade one. They associated learning to read with their role as learner.

Interviewer: Why do you think that some children have trouble reading?
Gordon: 'Cause they don't join in often.
Brenda: 'Cause they are kind of behind the other kids.
Michael: Because they don't try as hard, or concentrate.

Gordon, Michael and Brenda, all saw themselves as playing an active role as reader and learner. Their interactions during Shared Book Experiences were dynamic; both adults and children were active contributors.

Roles as Readers

In this section, the recursive nature of the children's goal structures, their self efficacy and responsibility toward reading, how they used environmental print, and how they orchestrated language to structure their reading, will be described. Then, specific events which happened spontaneously, but which seemed to impact upon the three children's understandings of reading will be presented.

Goal Structures

All three children discussed goals they had in relation to reading, but they varied in the complexity and nature of the goal structure. They varied in the way they saw themselves at present and how they perceived their actual development in relation to their potential development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that molar activities vary in "the extent to which the activity is consciously perceived as having an explicit goal structure":

> Whether the path to the goal is perceived as direct, involving a single course of action...or as involving a sequence of steps or subgoals, consisting of a series of preplanned stages. (p. 46)

The following quotations are representative of general patterns noted.

> Researcher: What things does a kid have to do to be a good reader?
> Gordon: Join in lots and be a good helper with books.
> Brenda: You have to learn the words. Look at the pictures to read the words. You would turn the page and do the same thing. That's how you learn to read.
> Michael: Practise a lot.

Gordon: Gordon was more attuned to external goals. For example, he was very concerned with completing a task successfully. He judged the difficulty of a book by its thickness. His proficiency as a reader was related to how long it took him to read rather than the difficulty of the material. "I can read anything as long as it takes." Gordon saw the relationship between his actual and potential development as a specific, attainable goal. When asked, "When does a person become a really good reader?", he replied, "When he helps with the day and weather."

Brenda: Brenda focussed on both internal satisfaction and external requirements. When asked, "When does a person become a really good reader?" she replied, "When they think they've done it good. And they learned their job good in school like they're supposed to do." This reply was open-ended and related to her present level ~~of~~ functioning. Brenda was concerned with completing tasks successfully. Brenda also focussed on long term goals. Her major motivation seemed to be learning more. She wanted to get smarter, to go to university like her cousin Glenn, who hadn't failed once. These goals are positively reinforced in our culture.

Brenda realized that it would take time for her to become an independent reader. She explained:

> When you learn how to read it takes a long time to learn how to write and read and print. Them are hard to do. Learn how to spell words. When we put every letter we can hear in the word and write them.

Brenda told the researcher that children experiencing difficulty would read "easy books." She also realized that when she became more proficient at reading, she wouldn't rely on familiar books but would be able to read books that she'd "never seen before."

Michael: Michael tended to emphasize internal strategies. When asked, "How do you learn to read?", he replied "trying."

Michael described what he liked about reading in terms of actual and potential development. "You learn a new word each day." And at another point during the interview he stated, "But I don't always know all the words and how to spell all of them." Michael's goals with regard to reading were open-ended, related to his present level of functioning and they focussed on strategic behavior. An advantage to this type of goal structure is that he could be continually rewarded as he became a more proficient reader.

Michael demonstrated a "connectedness", a satisfaction with "being" at his present level, while knowing that there was potential for further growth as a reader. This "connectedness", was evident in the way Michael viewed himself in comparison with those around him, either as people with whom he could compare his progress, or as models for further development. According to Michael, all readers take an active role in reading; they all concentrate. His sister who was a year younger than him, read 'easier books' like Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Junior. Michael "mostly reads pretty hard books." On the other hand, his mom and dad read "bigger books," "like no pictures," and they just read the words. Although he told the researcher that reading was not a hard thing for him to do, he acknowledged that in grade one, he "reads easier stuff" than an adult. At school, Michael described a classmate, John, who had trouble reading because "he doesn't learn as fast." He saw himself as further advanced than John. Michael was successful at school and therefore was receiving positive reinforcement in that others were not able to do what he was able to do.

All three children felt that becoming more proficient at reading words was a very important part of becoming a reader. "Reading words" seemed to mean a very different thing to Gordon, who was relying on memory or picture clues as he "read" than it did to Michael, who was practically an independent reader, or than it did to Brenda who was just beginning to focus on sound/print relationships as she was reading.

In summary, the three children's goal structures concerning reading were very individual. The time required to accomplish their goals varied. The relation between internal cognition and external actions appeared to be different for each child. In the interviews, Gordon focussed on external achievement and set specific, attainable goals for himself. Brenda was concerned with completing tasks successfully and with long term goals. She focussed on external achievement and internal satisfaction. Michael saw himself as experiencing in the present while having the potential to become a more proficient reader. He focussed on internal development and strategic behavior. It is possible that knowledge of children's goal structures would provide an indication of the direction in which their potential development was proceeding. The children's goal structure probably was a recursive, stabilizing influence in their reading development. It also could be a yardstick against which they judged their performance. If the children were able to accomplish their goals, their self efficacy would be increased.

Self Efficacy and Responsibility

Bandura, Adams, and Berger (1977) defined an efficacy expectation as "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes" (p. 126). In both the structured interviews and the Shared Book Experiences, it was evident that all three children considered themselves as capable of reading, although Gordon's concept of himself as reader appeared to be less well established than the other two. On one occasion, he explained that, "Sometimes I'm not very good of a reader but most of the time I am." Gordon said that it's hard sometimes when he doesn't know a word. Success or lack of success seemed to have a great influence on how the three children perceived themselves.

During taped recordings of Shared Book Experiences all three children's "errors" tended to be meaningful with regard to context. However, Gordon made more "errors" than the other two children and was corrected repeatedly, particularly in the home, while the other two children were seldom corrected. Thus, Michael and Brenda received a great deal of intrinsic reinforcement for fluent reading; they were not interrupted, while Gordon, although quite successful, did not receive as much positive reinforcement for "reading" independently; he was frequently interrupted and corrected. This may have been a reason why, of the three children, Gordon's self efficacy was the least well established or stable over time.

Throughout the interviews, all of the children indicated that they saw themselves as being responsible for their own learning. However, the children varied in the extent to which they assumed ownership for their reading. In comparing the Shared Book Experiences in which the three children participated, there were differences in the power structure, and in the success which each of the children experienced.

Gordon: During the interviews, the researcher observed that Gordon was often explaining the reading process as he had been told by others, rather than what he was experiencing. At this point in his development, he may have needed to use the words of others to explain something for which he did not yet have his own words. Other's words would help him to construct an understanding of reading. It is also possible that he was experiencing reading in a different way than the independent readers around him. If this is what was taking place, these words could confuse him.

Gordon was very interested in details and in fine discriminations of sound and sight. He tended to focus on microprocesses. His attention was drawn to the alphabet, spelling words, sight word recognition, rhyming, individual word meanings, and beginning sounds during Shared Book Experiences and other literacy activities in which he was engaged. A paper, lying on the table during one of the home visits, illustrates this dichotomy of meaning and more abstract sight/sound word distinctions. It consisted of an inventory of words that he knew. The words were organized and categorized either on a meaning level - words associated with his family, or on a skill level - homonyms, (to, too, too), rhyming words, (me, we). His mother explained that he had written it by himself, on his own initiative.

During Shared Book Experiences, by turns, Gordon was attentive to pictures. He "read" the story rapidly indicating memorization but when guided by parent and teacher, he was beginning to be concerned about matching sound to print. When stories were less familiar to Gordon, and/or when he was reading on his own, he attended to pictures and made up stories to go with the pictures. He was able to more closely approximate independent reading with the help of an adult than he could on his own. Thus, he needed adult assistance or scaffolding to be fluent.

The flow of meaning tends to be delicate and can be disrupted. In the home, Gordon's mother periodically interrupted Gordon with such comment as, "You're singing it!", "Keep the book here so I can see it too" or "You're not reading it." She also interrupted the flow by correcting him without offering him any support other than the corrected word. She often did not wait for him to indicate that he was having difficulty. In this manner, the power seemed to shift to the mother and Gordon was rather dependent on the mother for help.

In the school, the teacher encouraged Gordon to focus on the meaning first and to use his knowledge of previous readings of the text to support his reading. In this way, the teacher and Gordon together constructed a blanket of meaning. Within this context he could read the words and begin to focus his attention on the data-driven aspects of the process without interrupting the flow of the story. However, the teacher didn't support his attention to data-driven elements of text. She encouraged him to use context clues and memory for text when he endeavored to read through sound/symbol relationships.

In the other two homes, the parents adopted a more supportive role. The children's purpose appeared to be practise, mastery of the print, and showing the parents what they knew. The parents corrected the children's "errors" and they elaborated, relating the text to personal experiences. However, they did not tend to disrupt the flow of meaning. In the taped recordings of Shared Book Experiences in the homes, Brenda and Michael experienced greater control over reading independently than Gordon. Michael and Brenda read the text without many overt interruptions from their parents. Gordon experienced more interruptions and required overt assistance to continue more frequently.

Brenda: Brenda's descriptions of reading appeared to be her own understanding rather than something that she had been told. This indicates that she was able to express in her own words what it was like to be a reader. It is also possible that her present understanding of reading more closely approximated an independent model of reading. This was substantiated by other information gathered during the data collection.

At the time of the study, Brenda was experiencing a transition from fluent to dysfluent reading, which, according to Clay (1979) and Doake (1981), indicates that Brenda was moving closer to becoming an independent reader, where she no longer would need to rely on familiar stories. Clay explained:

> Now there comes an important transition which it takes some experience to observe. The child combines his ability to produce sentences, half memories for the text, the picture clues to meaning, and visual cues from letters. Putting all those together in a sequence of actions he seems to compose his response word by word (p. 51).

Brenda's mother was encouraging Brenda to move from memorized reading to word by word matching:

> They get ahead. They know a story so well. They know what's happened so they read on ahead of themselves. I don't know if you heard me. I ...said quietly to her when she was reading...I said slow down. They skip the words and go on ahead and put in words.

Brenda's mother cued Brenda by shaking her head, yes or no and by actions which helped Brenda remember the text, like pretending to drink from a cup. This provided a scaffold or support and encouraged her to read carefully and accurately without disrupting the flow of meaning.

Brenda was aware that the way in which she was approaching print was changing but she was confused about what was happening:

> Researcher: Are you a better reader now than when you started grade one?
> Brenda: I was better at the first. Now I'm getting slow at it.

Even though Brenda seemed to be somewhat confused, she was beginning to realize what fluent reading was all about:

> Brenda: Like yesterday...I was working in one of my math books and...my mom was helping me....I forgot this word "reading". (laughed)
>
> Researcher:...how did you figure it out?
>
> Brenda: Well, I sounded out the letters and I think of the word and I figured it was 'reading'.

Brenda's confusion also seemed to be tempered by her long term goals, her positive attitude, her confidence in herself, her relationships with more experienced readers, and her interest in reading. These other positive influences enabled her to deal effectively with confusion without a threat to her sense of self efficacy. Brenda maintained that she was a good reader because she was smart and because she helped other kids in school.

Michael: Michael, like Brenda, was able to express his ideas in a personally meaningful manner. In dealing with print, Michael exhibited considerable freedom to choose alternate strategies for dealing with print but the freedom was constrained by the context. More than the other two, he could see what he could do and what he didn't have to do. His approximations to adult reading were closer than the other two. This made it easier to proceed from the known to unknown. He was rapidly becoming an independent reader.

Michael's preoccupation at the time of the study was words: words in reading and writing, words in a story, words within a sentence and in isolation.

"Reading is reading words and reading them," Michael explained.

In Shared Book Experiences when Michael paused in his reading, Michael's mother, Kristen, often supported him by repeating the phrase that Michael had just read and supplying the difficult word. While Michael was concentrating on the print as he was reading, Kristen's mother commented on the text. When a break in the reading occurred, she used the text as a base from which to elaborate her personal thoughts and feelings. At an implicit level, Kristen was encouraging Michael to think about the meaning while he was concentrating on the print.

Shared Book Experiences, Self Efficacy and Responsibility. At their best, social interactions in the school and the home externalized aspects of reading process. It is possible that in these children's literacy environments, there was a movement from scaffolded interactions with texts where the reading and discussion was externalized, occurring intersubjectively, toward independent reading which involved a conversation which took place inside the child's head as the child read silently. This supports Vygotsky's (1978) notions that learning begins in the interaction between child and more experienced learners and then is internalized.

Baker and Brown (as cited in Irwin, 1986) explained that good readers are not consciously aware of comprehension until a triggering event signals a failure. Good reading is fluent. Bandura (1977) found that **participant modelling** where the balance of power was gradually shifted in favor of the developing person, enhanced self efficacy. Shared Book Experiences were an ideal context within which this participant modelling of fluent reading could be reinforced. The familiarity of the texts and the support of the adults were positive factors; contributing to the children's positive experiences with reading **before** they could read independently.

During Shared Book Experiences Michael and Brenda were supported in their efforts to model fluent reading in the home and in the school, while Gordon's experiences were more successful in the school. The power structure during Shared Book Experiences was very different in Gordon's home. Brenda and Michael assumed control of the reading while their mothers adopted a more supportive role. On the other hand, Gordon's mother assumed a more active role in the interaction leaving Gordon to follow her lead.

In the home, Michael's and Brenda's memory of text carried them through the reading. Kristen and Caroline supported their children as they read. This created an environment in which Brenda and Michael were able to orchestrate analysis of text with development of meaning. In Gordon's home Janice tended to adopt a more authoritative role, and this seemed to disrupt Gordon's flow of meaning.

Environmental Print

In the literature, links have been made between the children's knowledge of environmental print and beginning reading (Hiebert, 1981). Michael and Brenda were both actively involved with environmental print. Again, individual differences were noted. Because the researcher did not find an opportunity to encourage Gordon to talk about environmental print without destroying the ecology, he was not asked. In further research, examples of environmental print could be used to stimulate a discussion.

Michael: His response seems to indicate that he was actively involved in reading environmental print.

> Michael: I read instructions.
> Interviewer: Do you? Like what?
> Michael: Instructions for cooking.
> Interviewer: Do you? You sometimes read parts of recipes?
> Michael: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Do you read anything else?
> Michael: When we're going somewhere, I read stuff around the city, like signs. Like that helps me. Read.

Brenda: Brenda provided examples of environmental print. "Well, there are names on the packages." Then, she extended this to "books that are out" [in the stores] and "chocolate bars that have their name on it." Brenda was less actively involved than Michael in reading environmental print at the time of the study, although her mother did say that while grocery shopping, Brenda was actively involved in spelling from the labels she saw in the store. The differences in the two children seemed to be a matter of degree rather than of presence or absence of active involvement. The matter of degree seems to be related to how important reading environmental print was for each child. This was consistent with their goal structure and purposes for reading. Michael was interested in words wherever he found them while Brenda was more interested in paper, pencil and book activities.

Orchestration

Another recursive aspect which afforded the three children some continuity across reading events, was the ways in which the three children were using aspects of language to help them read. This could be considered a sort of **self-scaffolding**, in that in coordinating aspects of language, the children were better able handle the complexities of reading. The children coordinated (1) reading and viewing, (2) reading and dramatization, (3) memorized reading and chunking, (4) reading and writing, and (5) levels of language. Using information at their disposal to read stories could be termed orchestration in that the children were coordinating these diverse aspects to help them read.

Reading and viewing. When talking about Shared Book Experiences, Michael, Brenda and Gordon discussed both looking at pictures and reading the print. In practice, Michael and Brenda seemed to orchestrate or relate reading and viewing, while Gordon tended to focus on one or the other, unless reminded to do both.

Reading and dramatization: All three children talked about dramatizing parts of the story as they read. For example, Brenda explained how she and her mother would act out events in the story, "Red is Best", like drinking the red cup. There was a kinesthetic as well as a verbal memory. The three children were able to remember better because they experienced the material in more depth.

Memorized reading and chunking. Michael talked about using expression in his voice in "Red as Best" to indicate the characters who were talking. Using expression in one's voice as one reads, or to read in meaningful units, which is sometimes called chunking helps one understand meaningful units in discourse. The teacher emphasized reading with expression in the school and recordings of Shared Book Experiences in both the home and the school indicated that the three children had internalized the emphasis and phrase patterns which she placed on certain words.

Reading and writing. The three children did not seem to make a clear distinction between reading and writing. They discussed both reading and writing when the researcher asked them specific questions about reading. In the following transcription, Gordon was reading the book Snow, by P.D. Eastman with his mother.

> Janice: Put on your snowballs one by one.
> Gordon: (mumble) snow (mumble) one by one.
> (simultaneously)
> Janice: Our house of snow will soon be done.
> Gordon: (mumble) snow (mumble) soon be done.
> (simultaneously)
> Gordon: done d-o-n (spelling the letters)
> Janice: e
> Gordon: d-o-n-e done

Gordon was spelling the words as he was reading. He was attending to letter names in individual words within the context of the story.

Michael explained how he saw the relationship between reading and spelling. His ability to explain what he was doing indicates that he had internalized the relationship. He explained, "If you know a word how to read it, you know how to spell it." This seemed to be a very important concept for him. Bissex (1981) also noted that this was a milestone in her son's reading development. In another section of the interview, Michael told the researcher, "Like if you learn a word, you learn how to spell that word. Like 'tomorrow'-I know how to read 'tomorrow'. Then I learned how to spell it. And I learn more words each day." Michael was using reading and writing processes to support each other.

Levels of Language: Michael, in particular, seemed to be orchestrating different levels of language. In the following transcriptions, he discussed the parallel processes of reading and writing, and the levels of words, sentences, and stories.

> Researcher: What things does a kid have to learn to be a good reader?
> Michael: Learn the words. Then read a sentence to see if they know how to read the sentence.

Michael focussed on individuals words and placed them within a larger context.

> Researcher: What things do you need to do to be a better reader than you are right now?
> Michael: Read a lot.
> Researcher: Anything else that you need to do to be
> Michael: Write and read sentences.

Michael understood that he could learn to read by writing words in sentences. "Printing a story and then trying to read it."

Beginning in kindergarten, Michael copied paragraphs out of the Childcraft Encyclopedia. This activity could be described as borrowing another consciousness to gain control over the activity (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1986). During one visit to Michael's home, he showed the researcher a story that he had copied from a Walt Disney book. He had changed the names and some of the grammatical structures to make his own story. This means of dealing with print is a later form of using the structure of another to improve one's writing. One could say that Michael was "scaffolding" his writing. He was gradually withdrawing the supports as he became more able to manipulate written language. He was gradually gaining control of the process.

It is possible that as the children become independent readers, they will gradually internalize some of these scaffolding techniques which seem to have served as a recursive basis as they read with others. Thus, the methods of orchestration discussed above would undergo changes as the children develop and grow.

The different ways in which the three children used pictures is an indication that reading strategies are altered as children become more proficient. It seems that because meaning is more readily accessible through pictures than through words (Carr, McCauley, Sperber, & Parmelee, 1982) it is possible to move from using pictures to tell the story, to coordinating pictures with words. Clay (1979) noted this progression. It is possible that as the children continue to gain experience in reading, they will be able to coordinate internalized images of meaning as one reads print without pictures. Michael observed that his parents read books without pictures. His expectations of what reading is could have been structured by his observations. Michael may begin to internalize visual images because he has seen that this is a further stage in reading.

Molar Events

In addition to recursive elements, the three children discussed specific, spontaneous events which seemed to be very important to them. These happenings could be labelled **molar events** to distinguish them from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) **molar activities**, which by definition are more global in nature, less tied to idiosyncratic experiences.

Gordon: A molar event for Gordon seemed to be the revelation that he was able to obtain information from books that adults did not know. In the first interview, when the researcher and Gordon were discussing literacy models in the home, the following conversation took place. Gordon was explaining that his mother reads the *Reader's Digest*.

> Researcher: Yes, that has stories. That has all kinds of things in it, doesn't it?
>
> Gordon: You know once my Dad - I knew something that he didn't know about!
>
> Researcher: What?
>
> Gordon: Guess what? Those are Chinaberry trees. He didn't know if we had them but he read in the *Reader's Digest*. And there are some in the States.
>
> Researcher: And you know about Chinaberry trees? How did you know about Chinaberry trees?
>
> Gordon: Because they were in a book.

Gordon was learning that he could acquire information and learn things from a book.

Michael: A molar event for Michael seemed to be his teacher's modelling of risk taking and his mother's use of the dictionary when figuring out how to spell a word. The researcher and Michael were discussing whether Michael felt that he was a better reader than when he started grade one. Michael felt that a criteria for evaluating one's progress in reading was if one could both read and spell the word.

> Michael: But I don't always know all the words and how to spell all of them.
> Researcher: Is that right?
> Michael: Like Miss Jardine doesn't know how to spell tobogganing.
> Researcher: That's a hard one, isn't it?
> Michael: She doesn't know if it's doubled or not doubled n's.
> Researcher: So if you don't, what do you do? What does she do if she doesn't know?
> Michael: She writes it the way down that she thinks.
> Researcher: That she thinks it is?
> Michael: Yeah.
> Researcher: Sometimes I think Miss Jardine looks it up afterwards in the dictionary and then she comes back and checks it.
> Michael: My mom checked it in the dictionary too.
> Researcher: Did she? And how is it spelled?
> Michael: You don't double the n.
> Researcher: You don't? For tobogganing? I didn't know that. I'd have said you would.
> Michael: (laugh)
> Researcher: I guess I didn't know either (laugh)

It's possible that Michael will relate this experience to other contexts and will write words as they sound and look. Later he will check in the dictionary.

Brenda: It is possible that these molar events are not one of a kind, but a series of experiences which enrich the child's understanding of reading. For example, Brenda and her mother discussed several events which seemed to enhance her interest in characterization. The first excerpt is a conversation between Brenda's mother Caroline and the researcher. The other discussions involve Brenda and the researcher.

> Researcher: How does Brenda react to the stories?
> Caroline: She laughs in the funny parts, I guess. But when she was two, and I used to read her the Disney stories that I had like Cinderella. She used to get so angry at the picture of the stepsisters ripping the dress off Cinderella she used to hit the book. "Bad sisters!" she used to say and we used to laugh at her. We'd get her to do it again. We'd turn back to that page. "What are they doing, Brenda?" And we'd go through it again.

Brenda and the researcher were discussing whether or not Brenda visited the library. She showed the researcher a book sitting on her dresser from the school library.

> Brenda: What's her name do you think? (indicating a little girl pictured on the cover of the book.
> Researcher: I don't know, what's her name?
> Brenda: You'll have to try to guess.
> Researcher: Ok. Pigtails. What is her name? Freckles? I can't guess, what is it?
> Brenda: Brenda! (giggles)
> Researcher: Is that right? Well, you've got a book with your name.

The character in this book was personally meaningful for Brenda. Here, Brenda was identifying with the main character.

The researcher asked Brenda what she thought about when she was reading with her mom or when her mom was reading with her. Brenda talked about a specific story, Stone Soup.

> Brenda: And the girl in it, she's a greedy gut.
> Researcher: She was really greedy - yes - very greedy.
> Brenda: Yup. She wanted it all to herself.

What interested Brenda about the book was the greedy character. In this example and the first example, Brenda was adopting a third person stance, distancing herself from the characters and evaluating them.

Molar events seem to be unique experiences which have a great impact for the individual, perhaps influencing their thinking and the direction in which they will develop and grow. Because these spontaneous happenings were important to the children, they reflected upon them and these understandings became part of their understanding of what reading was all about, that is, spontaneous occurrences can cause the child to expand their understanding. Eventually, these reflections become integrated and are part of the basis on which the child's expectations are built.

It is interesting to note that with all three children, a discussion of molar events did not occur as a result of direct questioning, but rather as new directions of thought stemming from the original discussion. It was as if something in the discussion was a "perturbation" (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984) for this molar event. Something that was said in the discussion triggered that memory. During the interviews, the style of conversation seemed to change when the children introduced unexpected elements into the discussion. The roles of the participants seemed to be transformed from researcher/interviewee to a more equal sharing of information that built one utterance on the other.

The transcriptions quoted in the following paragraphs seemed to be part of a general pattern that indicated the two boys were more interested in gaining information from print, or a logical-scientific mode of reality, while Brenda was more interested in personalities, or a more insightful mode. The teacher's emphasis on narrative prose and poetry more closely suited Brenda's interests concerning reading. Although the two boys enjoyed stories, their interest in informational material and "how to" books was not as well represented in the classroom at the time of the study. The teacher explained,

> I just realized I don't have a lot of them [factual books] out this year-probably because we haven't done a research unit yet. We usually do one before Christmas and a couple after. It will follow along with a theme..."

Summary

Spontaneous events seemed to enable the children to see how reading could be meaningful for them. It is possible that through interaction with the school, where reading is considered on a more explicit basis, spontaneous events like those described above had become recursive at a deeper level of personal meaningfulness than would have been possible had the children's literacy experiences remained at a less structured level. Because the teacher was encouraging the children to link reading events, to abstract from present contexts to new situations, and to think about what they were doing, the children were able to have more control over their interactions with texts.

The ecological transition to grade one created a situation in which two things could happen. First, because the children were now experiencing literacy in two contexts, they had the opportunity to make some mesosystem links; that is to compare one setting with the other. When they were in the home, for example, they could abstract from the present environment to think about a similar literacy event in the school setting. Goldfield and Snow (1982) noted that young children could learn through associating certain behaviors with familiar contexts. If similar events were repeated in different contexts, it would seem that development would be facilitated. Familiar books provided an ideal context in which this could occur. Second, because the teacher talked about literacy in a more explicit and abstract manner, events could become more recursive, more deeply ingrained within the children's understandings about reading. They could visit and revisit experiences in a variety of ways.

In Michael's case, the molar event took place in the school. He talked about it in the home and his mother extended the experience, reinforcing what the teacher had said and demonstrating to Michael that he could monitor what he had written by checking his spelling in the dictionary. Gordon's experience originated in the home. If the teacher encouraged the children to look up information in the school environments, this experience would be reinforced. Most certainly, in Brenda's situation, an interest in charactization which began early in her life, was talked about again and again, both in the home and in the school. It seems that connections or links at various levels and in various contexts were very important to the three children's developing constructs of themselves as readers.

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter Four began with a description of the three children's literacy environments and concluded with a discussion about how the children perceived themselves as readers in relation with their literacy environments.

There was a structure, a support, a recursive aspect to the children's environment which gave them stability. These recursive aspects tended to be one of three types: implicit, explicit and personal. Because both the environments and the children themselves were actively involved in structuring the environment, there existed a reciprocity within the literacy systems - the child and the environment (physical and social) were both influencing the course of development.

What made the structures less stable, what provided a force for growth was the spontaneity, the unique and unpredictable quality evident in the three children's literacy environments. Spontaneous elements infused the environments with life and provided an impetus for change. Recursive elements provided the children with a relatively stable basis of support from which to deal with chaotic elements.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Bruner (1986), both emphasized that one of the best ways of helping young children to develop and grow is to scaffold the child's development by gradually allowing a shift in the balance of power from adult to child as the child becomes more proficient. It seemed to be spontaneous occurrences, as they were nested within recursive events, which provided the momentum for this change by perturbing, agitating, causing the children to be aware of possibilities for change.

In this study it was evident that not only the adults but the children were scaffolding their literacy environments. The children provided evidence that they had internalized constructs about the nature of reading that were channeling their interactions with the environment. They used materials, space and time in a way that supported their growth.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter Five consists of three sections. The chapter begins with a summary of the research. Then, conclusions and implications are discussed from an ecological perspective. This second section includes a discussion of literacy contexts from the perspectives of reading as a cultural artifact: the context for the immediate event, the text, and the task; reading as thinking: the reader; and reading as intersubjectivity: the dyadic unit and the zone of proximal development. Chapter Five concludes with recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Research

This study was designed to observe young children's developing constructs of themselves as readers and their relation to their literacy environments in the home and in the school. In Chapter One, the possibility that reading may be regarded from different perspectives was introduced. Relationships between inner and outer reality were explored. In Chapter Two and Chapter Three, a framework from which to analyze the data were developed. It was suggested that the best way to accomplish the research objectives was to discuss and to observe reading in the most commonplace of surroundings, within which subjects could relate anything abstract to something familiar and natural. It was helpful to study the subject/object dialectic as it pertained to the three children's reading development from an Ecological Perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner's framework seemed to provide a way to study both inner and outer reality without placing a sharp distinction between the two. Roles (inner consciousness), roles and activities (outer behaviors), relations and activities (inner/outer dynamics), were envisioned as being nested within a larger reality of how one sees oneself in relation to the world.

The research techniques outlined in Chapter Three tapped the three children's expectations about their roles as readers. They provided information about how the three children in relation with their literacy environments were shaping their constructs; how they were learning about reading towards the point where they could read independently. It was anticipated that through an analysis of the data collected, a picture of the children's constructs of reading, from a developmental perspective, would emerge.

In Chapter Four, the data were categorized according to levels from the dyad to the macrosystem and also according to the elements: role, relation and molar activity, which Bronfenbrenner hypothesized were the fundamental building blocks of an ecological approach to development. Throughout the data analysis, the assumption that there is a reciprocal, spiralling relationship between an individual's developing constructs of reading and environmental experiences, became more and more evident. Olson, Torrance and Hildyard, (1985), described the nature of this relationship:

> We are not suggesting that environmental changes cause behavior; rather we are examining the ways in which human actions, intentions, goals, beliefs, and skills are executed and altered in an environment in which people have access to written language. (1985, p. 4)

The three children's developing constructs of reading, which included expectations about intentions, goals, beliefs, relations and activities; characteristics of the environment at levels of increasing abstraction from the immediate situation; and interactions between self and environment including activities and relations; all had a bearing on each individual's reading behaviors.

Donaldson (1978) emphasized that young children need the support of familiar contexts when they first begin school. Young children seem to use familiar contexts to help them learn new concepts by recreating what they have experienced in one setting in another similar context. Snow and Goldfield (1983) described this strategy as "say in any particular situation what others have said in previous occurrences of that situation" (p. 552). In order for children to use this strategy, similar events must recur regularly.

This strategy fits well with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of development which emphasized that internal developmental processes are awakened in the interaction between self and other and gradually internalized. According to a constructivist view, these verbal interactions would not be mere imitations but rather reconstructions of what has taken place on previous occasions. They would be spontaneous in that their occurrence would be unpredictable and that they would be adapted to specific contexts.

Snow (1982) explained that in order for this strategy to be "exploited", the social environment should be structured in such a manner that similar events would recur. In the data analysis, it was apparent that on levels of increasing abstraction from the immediate situation, from the level of the individual to the macrosystem, this recursion was an important aspect of the children becoming independent readers. However, the recursion was only part of the event. In the data analysis, it became evident that there was a nesting of stabilizing structures within unpredictable or spontaneous elements and vice versa.

The structural or recursive aspects of literacy events occurred in three forms: personal, implicit, and explicit. These three types of recursion were defined in Chapter Four. Personal recursion refers to the individual structuring his own environment, while the other two refer to the individual in relation with his environment. Implicit recursion appeared to evolve spontaneously while explicit recursion was more deliberately planned by adults in the environment. Like Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized, there was reciprocity in the dialectic between individual and literacy environment - both influencing and being influenced by circumstances.

Summary and Conclusions: An Ecological Perspective

Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Mosenthal (1984), described ways to study development in natural literacy environments from different perspectives. Bronfenbrenner was concerned with psychological development, while Mosenthal was concerned with reading in the classroom, primarily from the teacher's perspective. Their conclusions were compatible and together they provide a more comprehensive view of the reading event involving roles, relations and activities. In the following sections, conclusions and implications of the data collected in this study are discussed within a framework based on the writings of Bronfenbrenner and Mosenthal.

Mosenthal discussed five perspectives from which one may view reading in a classroom situation: setting, text, task, reader, situation organizer. These perspectives could apply to the home environment as well.

Context for the Immediate Event

Mosenthal (1984) discussed the importance of considering the classroom setting in which literacy events take place. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized that it is important to consider social structure both in the immediate and the remote environment.

The three children were growing as readers in a manner related to their experiences with literacy in their environments. In the data analysis, evidence indicates the power of all levels of the environment in influencing the direction which each individual's reading development takes.

In the research it seemed that subjects were influenced at the **macrosystem** level by views of reading held by society. All subjects saw reading both as a skill - a technology to be mastered and developed, and also as an art - a human endeavor. However, at the time of the study, they varied in the emphasis that they placed on different aspects of reading. On the whole, this paradox in their thinking appeared to sit quite comfortably on the shoulders of the subjects; they appeared to have constructed their knowledge of reading to encompass apparently disparate views; their constructs were unique as well as similar to the other subjects.

At the level of the **mesosystem**, the ecological transition to grade one seemed to set the stage for the children to become independent readers. In this study, all subjects associated learning to read with the primary grades at school. This association appeared to be a positive catalyst for growth and change in the lives of Michael, Brenda, and Gordon. The three children indicated that they felt confident they were able to read which probably helped them to feel comfortable in the new situation. All three children received a great deal of positive reinforcement because they were succeeding. Gordon experienced the least positive reinforcement but he was the least advanced in his literacy development.

The openness of the families of the three children to the school's influence and the teacher's willingness to communicate with the home, enabled the children to form strong mesosystem connections that supported their reading development. The three children discussed and engaged in school activities in their homes. The teacher tried to bring the children's home experiences into the school. This was facilitated by regular communication between the teacher and the three parents. There were strong links between home and school.

What are the implications of these macrosystem and mesosystem influences? It is important to recognize the power of the literacy environnments of young children in the home and in the school and how important positive socializing experiences are to the development of healthy individuals. With the mobility of our society, the accessibility of media like television, and the urbanization of our communities, young children are exposed to a large variety of influences. The home, the school and other institutions in which young children grow and develop should provide positive support to offset possible negative influences elsewhere.

Bronfenbrenner (1986a) discussed the growing extent of youthful alienation in a number of modern industrialized societies. He explained that "the best way to counteract alienation is through the creation of connections or links" (p. 434). There should be strong, comfortable connections between home and school. Young children should be provided with firm, flexible principles which they may carry with them as they mature. But within these they should be allowed room to grow in their own way.

In the contemporary education system, excellence, greater effiency, and accountability are highly valued.

These are very important, but they reflect only the logico-scientific way of viewing reality. Bruner (1986) reminds us that there are two ways of perceiving reality which together can make a richer whole. Reading as a human endeavor is often neither logical nor precise. Society should value not only excellence but the acceptance that all children will not develop and grow in the same manner at the same rate. It is so easy to close one's mind to the possibility that children can grow in different ways than what we as adults want and feel is expedient.

For the teacher, acceptance would involve a patient understanding when situations are observably less ordered or efficient or dissimilar to her own. Those children who do not approximate the agenda established by society would not experience the same satisfactions as the children in this study did unless they are supported, accepted, guided but not interfered with. It would be expedient for the teacher to be very aware of the home environment. Then she could build not only on children's strengths in skill areas but also strengths in their home environment. For example, she could capitalize on interests that are fostered on the nome. This could be another means by which she could start from the children's familiar contexts and build an underlying relatedness between herself and each child.

Educational institutions that recognize a developmental nature of reading would be better able to accommodate diversity than educational insitutions that define proficiency in very narrow terms. All three parents seemed to have an understanding that when their children began grade one, they should help their children to focus on the print. An approach to reading like the one adopted by the teacher enabled the children to capitalize on the experience with fluent reading with their parents before they had mastered the print. This experience seemed to be very satisfying for both parents and children.

The Text

Mosenthal (1984) described the text as another perspective from which to view literacy contexts. Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested that one should consider content in addition to process.

In this study, the use of materials both in the home and in the school supported the three children's literacy development. The three home environments provided a diverse supply of literacy materials which were available to the children although in comparison with studies reporting the literacy environments of early readers (Manning and Manning, 1984), the three home environments didn't seem to be quite as committed to literacy. The differences seemed to be a matter of the degree to which literacy was important in the lives of the three children and their families. The school environment was rich in literacy materials as well as in space and time afforded to literacy development.

Both parents and teacher guided the children's use of literacy materials by scaffolding difficult material, helping the children when they had difficulty with the print and providing the children with predictable texts which contained pictures as clues to the meaning. Both parents and teacher elaborated on the text relating events to children's real-life experiences. This made the texts more personally meaningful - it connected the known to the unknown thereby setting the stage for future growth in comprehension.

Snow and Goldfield (1983) identified three conditions that encourage the strategy of "say in any particular situation what others have said in previous occurrences of that situation."

> (a) that situations recur, (b) that children can identify a recurrence as an instance of the original situation; (c) that particular utterances have been produced during previous occurrences often and predictably enough that they are associated with the situation in the child's memory. (p. 553)

They explained that "book-reading is in some children's lives the best context for the fulfillment of these conditions" (p. 553). The teacher's deliberate use of familiar books in the school, a pattern also adapted by the home, provided a recursive context in which the children could re-present reading processes. For example, the children were provided with repetition of sight word vocabulary and sound/print relationships both on an implicit and explicit level in real contexts as they modelled fluent reading. In this manner, they could gradually master or bring these processes under conscious control.

It seemed that the accessibility of materials, the scaffolding of difficult material, the opportunity for practice, the use of predictable texts and texts with graphic illustrations, elaborations that related disembedded material to the children's real experiences and the repetition of sight word vocabulary and sound/print relationships are all important aspects of a beginning reader's literacy environment both at home and at school. These were accomplished within the Shared Book Experience. The Shared Book Experience is a very important means by which young children become independent readers. Familiar texts are, in effect, the context by which children can internalize an understanding of different aspects of the text over a period of time.

The Task

A third perspective from which to view literacy events according to Mosenthal (1984) is the task context, which consists of a variety of procedures. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that it is important to consider process as well as content.

The children used language at various levels and in various forms to help them deal with print. They coordinated or orchestrated (a) reading and viewing, (b) reading and dramatization, (c) memorized reading and chunking, (d) reading and writing, (f) reading and meaning, and (e) levels of language. It would seem that different aspects of language could develop parallel to each other, and they could actually support one another as they develop. This supports the research of Harste, Burke and Woodward (1981) and Hiebert (1981) which was discussed in Chapter Two.

In the school the teacher encouraged the children to relate aspects of language. There was also evidence that parents were doing similar things in the home. There were implicit links between home and school. It is likely that the children internalized what was first awakened in their interactions with others.

Orchestration of decoding and comprehension seems to be crucial to the development of independent reading. In Chapter Two, several writers indicated that when children orchestrate personal meaningfulness and decoding of print they become independent readers (Sulzby, 1981 and Smith, 1977).

It was evident in most of the Shared Book Experiences that the three children were modelling fluent reading even though they were not yet able to read on their own. Bandura, Adams, and Beyer (1977) found that participant modelling is a most powerful means of fostering self efficacy. The home, within the context of the Shared Book Experience, particularly for Michael and Brenda, provided an environment in which children could master skills in reading that currently needed practice. In this manner, reading became internalized and the processes were more automatic.

The teacher talked about the reading task with the children, modelled reading behaviors, and held the children accountable for thinking about what they were reading and how they were learning to read. Metacognitive discussions about the reading task took place in the school but there was little evidence in the data that they took place with as much frequency or regularity in the home. It was evident in the children's discussions that they were able to think about reading in a metacognitive manner. The three homes were a rich resource for experiences with literacy and for reinforcement of what the children were learning at school. The school was leading the children to conscious awareness.

What are the implications of the reading task as observed in this research? The Shared Book Experience provides an ideal context in which children could model the reading task, and orchestrate aspects of language. There is an opportunity to talk about reading on a more abstract level, but it is meaningful because it is familiar or contextualized. In the home and in the school, the Shared Book Experience is an enjoyable means of practicing reading. It includes affective, cognitive and social aspects which makes the task a very powerful context within which the young children were learning to read.

The Reader

Mosenthal (1984) identified the age, intelligence, background, experience and maturation of the reader as another perspective from which to regard the literacy environment.

All three children were active constructors of language. They experimented with how language works in the home environment. They used the materials, space and time provided by their parents to "play" with print. At school, the teacher reinforced this by encouraging the children to take risks; it was all right to experiment with language.

The three children's growing independence as readers was developing in two ways. First, the children were beginning to master the data-driven aspects of reading. Reading processes were being internalized, becoming more automatic, less conscious. Second, the children were becoming able to talk about reading in a personally meaningful manner. This could be called metacognition or reflective abstraction. The three children seemed to gaining more control over the process through being able to talk about reading. When one is able to discuss the demands of the reading tasks, the strategies one can employ in a reading activity, how one goes about reading, as well as the content of what one reads, one is better able to control one's relation with his literacy environment. Palinscar and Ransom (1988) discussed this metacognitive knowledge in relation to successful and less successful readers.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized that what is important is how individuals perceive their environments. It was evident that the subjects in this study were actively constructing their understandings about beginning reading. All subjects used these dynamic constructs in their interactions with others as they engaged in literacy activities and as they reflected upon the nature of reading. In the process, these constructs of reading were changing. The children were learning more and more about beginning reading as they gradually became independent readers. In Chapter Four, it was evident that the parents were learning as they participated with their children and as they communicated with the teacher. It is very likely that because the teacher's expectations about beginning reading were most stable, that is, most well established, her expectations were least susceptible to restructuring. Thus within the individual child, parent and teacher, there appeared to exist constructs, paradigms, schemas, or views of oneself in relation with the world which were deeply ingrained but which, perhaps because of the openness of parents and children to the influences of the school, were susceptible to change.

The three children's individual development was being helped and also to some extent hindered by the match or mismatch of their evolving constructs of reading and learning with those of their parents and teacher. This linking of constructs seemed to influence the extent of the connectedness among dyads and between home and school. It ran parallel to and appeared to influence each child's observable interactions with his literacy environment in intricate patterns. Differences in constructs appeared to cause difficulties for one child, Gordon. This child, his teacher and his mother held more disparate views than the two other child/parent/teacher triads.

All three children felt confident that they could read. This sense of self efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Mischel, 1986) seemed to enable the children to interact with their literacy environments in a confident manner even when they seemed to be experiencing "chaos" or states far-from-equilibrium. A review of the data collected indicated that Michael was relatively sure of himself with respect to reading processes, Gordon expressed a little doubt about what reading was while Brenda was rather confused. Prigogine and Stenger's (1984) theory of dissipative structures and Downing's (1982) observations about cognitive confusion with respect to beginning readers, as discussed in Chapter Two, serve to clarify the data.

Gordon: With respect to independent reading, Gordon was just beginning to realize that he needed to understand relationships between print and meaning. He could be moving into a far-from-equilibrium state as he comes to realize that he can coordinate conceptually-driven and data-driven processing. This realization will necessitate some adjustment in his understanding about himself as reader.

Brenda: Brenda seemed to be in a state of chaos, unsure what was happening. However, she expressed a great deal of confidence in herself and her mother and teacher, which indicated that she would probably be able reorganize her thinking to accommodate her new insights. Brenda was in the midst of a far-from-equilibrium state with respect to becoming an independent reader. As she continues to practice reading, likely in successful situations, she will probably be able to structure her understanding of herself as reader at a higher level of organization.

Michael: Michael seemed to be just moving out of a far-from-equilibrium state with respect to reading. He was very excited because he had discovered the value of print at different levels (words, sentences, stories), and he was relating sound and print to meaning. It is possible that he had experienced the cognitive confusion noted by Brenda, had reorganized his understanding of himself as reading and was now in the process of learning more about "the demands of reading tasks" and "the strategies one can employ in reading activity" (Garner as cited in Palinscar & Ransom, 1988).

The children's understanding of their roles as reader seemed to be in a constant state of change. It is likely that at all stages of development, individuals move in and out of these states of confusion or chaos and that in these states of chaos there is potential for growth or restructuring. The different states of being seemed to capture the dynamic, idiosyncratic nature of development which is so easily lost when one regards reading development as progressing in externally imposed stages.

Vygotsky (1978) explained that the capability of children with equal levels of mental development to learn under the guidance of a teacher could vary to a high degree (p. 86). Their potential development varies. Some of the processes by which young children attain some of the stage-like external manifestations may be similar but others may be very unique. It is possible that some young readers may be using the same processes but with different external manifestations. On the other hand, some young readers may be using different processes, but an objective, external analysis would pronounce their development as being quite similar.

This has many implications for the ways in which teachers determine instructional objectives and the ways in which they interact with their students. It would seem that teachers should be very aware of the child's competence as well as performance and the relationship between the two, in order to take advantage of children's potential for development. In becoming aware of what is taking place from the child's perspective, the teacher is in a better position to encourage children to reorganize at a higher level without imposing external, arbitrary standards, through providing perturbations or agitations which are within the children's zones of proximal development.

When one is talking with and observing the child, the following aspects of their constructs of reading seemed to provide insight into how the children were seeing reading at a particular point in time: goal structures, use of terminology, and molar events. In Chapter Four, the three children's goals about reading were described. Their goal structures were very individual in nature which seemed to be a very good indication about how they saw reading and perhaps would provide a way to understand how best to guide them. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that goal structures vary in complexity. It seemed that they also varied in whether external or internal rewards were emphasized.

The three children, like their parents, used terms such as "word" and "sounding out." However, their use of terminology seemed to be dependent upon their constructs of reading. Downing and Leong (1982) observed that use of terminology was a major source of cognitive confusion for the young reader.

The three children remembered specific events, "molar events", which seemed to be important for them. Because these events were remembered, it is possible that the children would repeat their behaviors and/or model the behaviors of others in similar situations.

Children's spontaneous comments during Shared Book Experiences often appeared to follow this pattern.

What children think about reading is very related to their experiences with reading and seems to play a very important role in their reading development. It would seem important for the teacher and the parent to listen to the children's insights into reading, to spontaneous comments as they read, to their use of terminology; and to ask children directly how they see reading, about their goal structures, and about experiences with literacy that were important to them. Once more is understood about children's spontaneous insights, it should be possible for the teacher to compare them to the teacher's more logical-scientific view of reading. In this manner, these expectations about reading could be indications of their zone of proximal development. They could serve as a guide for teacher and parents to encourage further growth and development.

The teacher in this study used an approach to reading that emphasized conceptually-driven processing. It seemed in her interactions with Gordon that she was not very open to his interests in data-driven processing. Although the teacher tended to approach the chidren's reading from a developmental perspective, she tended to ignore the potential direction in which

Gordon's development was headed. In this case, it is possible that the teacher's orientation to reading hampered her efforts to help Gordon. She seemed unable to provide links between the two ways of seeing reading. On the other hand, if Gordon is able to successfully orchestrate both conceptually-driven and data-driven processing by himself combining his strengths and his teacher's emphasis, he will have a richer understanding of reading than if his teacher had also emphasized data-driven elements. Nevertheless, the present conflict could also cause Gordon to remain in a state of chaos for extended periods of time since the cues he receives from the two more experienced learners during Shared Book Experiences are in conflict. If Gordon can resolve this conflict, he will be better for it; if he cannot resolve the conflict he may remain in a state of cognitive confusion, probably accompanied by loss of self efficacy.

If one is a teacher, it would be beneficial to have a clear idea of one's orientation to reading but to be very open to spontaneous aspects of a situation which might not fit in with one's approach. This entails acknowledgement that there are alternative perspectives from which one may regard reading. One must be consciously aware of one's conception of reading to be responsive to each child in his zone of proximal development. It is not necessary for all children to hold the teacher's beliefs. However, in accepting that there may be alternate ways in which one may become a reader, the teacher would be in a better position to support the child and to lead him a little ahead of his actualized development.

Situation Organizer Context

Mosenthal (1984) explained that it was important to consider the "situation organizer context" that consisted of the teacher and pupils in a lesson. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized the efficacy of considering the child and caretaker as a dyadic unit. In Chapter Four, a descriptive analysis of the data indicates that the manner in which the three children dealt with print was directly related to the interaction between teacher and children, parent and child, as they read books together in the home and in the school. This finding corroborates the works of Allington (1984) and Duffy, Roehler & Rackliffe (1986) in the school; and Hartman and Haavind (1977) in the home; which found relationships between what significant others did and the ways in which children interacted with their environment. This finding is also supported by the more general theories of Mead (1934), Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1986), and others who emphasized that children's interactions with significant others have a very powerful influence on development.

There were three types of underlying relatedness observed in this study. First, undergirding the dyadic relationship was the interest that all people involved had in literacy, the energy that was present and the caring that was shown on the part of the more experienced learners for the children in their care. Parents trusted the children's ability to read and children trusted the adults to help when needed. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), positive affective relations "enhance the pace and the probability of occurrence of developmental processes" (p. 58). This is a quality that doesn't easily lend itself to measurement. It was woven deep into the fabric of the dyadic relationship. It was evident in the time that was spent with the children and in the way that adults talked with their children.

A second type of underlying relatedness was shared knowledge; it was more evident in the home than in the school. Verbal interactions in the home could be more implicit than in the school, probably because the participants had shared more, knew each other more intimately than was possible in the school situation. This was another type of scaffolding. Vygotsky (1962,

1978) and Wells (1983) both noted such differences between the home and the school.

A third underlying relatedness between children and adults was the usual ways of dealing with literacy that were familiar and comfortable to the participants in the dyadic relationships. In both home and school, the children and adults discussed established ways of using materials, space and time. In the home, these rituals seemed to be more implicit, while in the school the teacher tended to deliberately establish routines. This is probably expedient in the school environment where there exists a many to one relationship and many different dyads which are established as a result of the classroom situation. Moreover, an established structure in the school environment could provide a context within which potential far-from-equilibrium states could lead to reorganization.

It also seemed that rituals in one setting could influence what took place in another setting. One example was the children's verbal interactions during Shared Book Experiences. In Chapter Four, it was seen that the teacher encouraged the children to participate in a manner similar to that described by Clay (1979) and Doake (1981). The children brought these habitual ways of dealing with print into the home environment. All three parents tried to support their children in this manner, strengthening the link between home and school. The parents were thus responsive to rituals established by the school, probably because they considered the teacher to be the authority on learning to read. The teacher endeavored to be aware of her students' home environments. She felt that it was important to provide opportunities for the parents to become aware of her reading program and to encourage parents to help their children in a similar manner to what was taking place in the school.

In two of the three homes, the role of teacher and of parent seemed to be complementary or contributing to a richer whole. The teacher was encouraging the children to extend their learning, leading them a little ahead of their development (Vygotsky, 1978), while the parents were allowing the child time, space and materials to master their present level of reading. In the third home, both mother and teacher were leading Gordon a little ahead of his development.

The role of the child was to participate actively in his literacy environments in both the home and the school. Perhaps because all three children approximated an average reading development established by society, their interactions with their parents in the home, on the whole, were comfortable, successful affairs. They were least so for Gordon who was least advanced in his literacy development and whose mother's constructs of reading and experiences with helping young children read were very different from those the teacher emphasized. It would seem important for teachers to control the nature of the reading material which young children take home to some extent to ensure that children have successful experiences in the home. It would be so easy for parents to become frustrated and worried if their children did not fit into the norm established by society.

An underlying relatedness of affective relations, shared knowledge and rituals established between child and adult were a very important foundation for verbal interactions that took place during Shared Book Experiences. In Chapter Two, it was seen that these relations had a long history, dating back to infancy.

In the school environment, it would be very important for the teacher to cultivate this underlying relatedness with each of her students. In this study, the positive support of the parents seemed to be an important factor in establishing such relationships. It appeared to be important for all participants to abstract from the present situation and to make connections between one context and another.

In Chapter Four, changes in Shared Book Experiences in the home which took place when the children began grade one were discussed. The Shared Book Experience became not only a time for sharing stories but a time for reading practice.

The Zone of Proximal Development

Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that all ecological studies should be conducted from a developmental perspective. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development holds much promise in studying reading from both the learner's and the teacher's perspective.

The zone of proximal development for these three children was not completely dominated by the adults in the environment. For these successful readers, their relationship with their environments was a complex mixture of both socializing influences and individual organization. That is, although this zone of proximal development focuses on the growing edge of the child's competence, these data clearly indicated children had considerable control over the direction of the Shared Book Experience.

Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development possesses great power in explaining what takes place. The zone of proximal development begins where the child is able to function totally independently and ends where the child is no longer capable of functioning adequately with the assistance of a more experienced learner. According to Vygotsky

(1978), it is potential development that is of greatest value in understanding how best to help young children. This potential development is dynamic, constantly changing.

A dilemma is that at this point in our knowledge, we can never be totally sure of the child's capabilities and how best to facilitate their growth as readers. Thus, we must allow the child room to do for himself what we cannot understand. Clay (1979) reiterated Smith's contention that "there are some important aspects of learning to read which the child must teach himself because we do not understand them" (p. 251). She went on to explain:

> We can be instructors in those areas where we know what the task involves. But other areas we can only act as someone whom the child can consult. (p. 251)

Thus there are areas where direct instruction is clearly needed and other areas where we as teachers need to play a more supportive role.

The children's literacy environments were structured both inadvertently and deliberately in order to support each child's literacy development; to withdraw support when required, to provide practise for mastery, to provide the child with the possibility for further growth, to reinforce the child for positive behaviors, and to establish links between literacy contexts. Bruner called this scaffolding - support from more experienced learners in reaching one's present abilities to accomplish specific purposes. In scaffolding, the balance of power (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 57) is gradually shifted in favor of the developing individual. Scaffolding was evident in the space, materials and time available for the children to engage in literacy activities, in the nature of the texts used, and in the interactions between children and parents or teacher. It was evident in the structured interviews as well as the tapes of Shared Book Experiences, that the dyadic relationships established in both the home and in the school were of paramount importance to the children's literacy development.

This scaffolding appeared to be unique blends of spontaneous and recursive elements. In the dyadic unit, recursive elements consisted of patterns of interaction which tended to provided support for the interaction by maintaining a flow. The potential for growth and change seemed to be in the nature of spontaneous comments which disrupted the patterns. These unexpected elements were intitiated by both children and adults. Sometimes these comments altered the direction of the conversation and a new pattern formed spontaneously. Even if a new pattern was not formed, it is possible that these spontaneous comments might awaken some latent development in the child. This could be an example of positive feedback or perturbations noted by Prigogine and Stengers (1984) which often led to a far-from-equilibrium state and possible recontruction.

Ideally, the scaffolding which should take place in every learning situation should be a careful structuring. It is important for the adult and children to have a goal, which in this case, was independent reading, but the more experienced learner must realized that development is a gradual process. It would be very easy to "jump right in" and provide help which might be counterproductive and might hinder the child's ability to self organize. From a constructivist perspective, the teacher or parent should be an enabling influence who supports the child in successive approximations while allowing him space to develop in his own way and in his own time.

In Chapter Two, it was explained that the nature of human development could be compared to trajectories, where arbitrary points are established from which to view individual children's reading development at particular points in time. Trajectories are reversible in that it was thought that one could study isolated variables at any point along the trajectory of pre-independent to independent reading and pinpoint where the child is at present in relation to the arbitrary standards established in the teacher's, or the researcher's head. It was thought that one could see where the child had been and also where the child is headed. From this perspective, development was seen to be atemporal, universal.

There are several problems with this approach when dealing with a complex activity like reading. First, 'measuring sticks' for development are established externally. Variables are isolated, decontextualized, and development is conceived in a linear way. For example, recognition of letters of the alphabet in disembedded contexts was considered to be a prerequisite for reading words. From this perspective, aspects of development are studied only when they are actualized and therefore more readily observable (Vygotsky, 1978). Consequently, potential development, which is development in progress, tends to be neglected. Thus, the complex interrelationships among variables were often ignored.

Using this trajectory approach to development, skills hierarchies have been established to enable teachers to evaluate children's progress in reading. More recently, stages of beginning reading have been described (Clay, 1979), (Doake, 1981). Stages are neither as narrow nor as linear in their focus. Stages, unlike skills hierarchies, indicate that reading is more complex, involving blends of factors, each influencing the other in complex ways. When one is concerned with stages as opposed to skills, one is concerned with interrelationships and many more variables.

One problem with stages is that they can be used to evaluate actualized development and therefore tell us little about development-in-progress. They tend to involve only cognitive aspects of reading and thus ignore affective factors. Another problem with the stages approach to beginning reading is a question of how one moves from one state of equilibrium with the environment to a new state at another stage of development. Thus, stage theory does not adequately account for reading development.

In Chapter Two, an alternative perspective on development was introduced (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984). Connections were discussed between this conception of development and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. This is a view based upon irreversibility, temporality and individual. Prigogine and Stengers explained that in addition to trajectories, development could be conceived as "arrows in time" in which the bases for observation are not arbitrary, externally imposed, but internal, an outcome of the development itself. At any point in time, the direction development takes becomes a basis from which a further development could occur.

It would seem that a means of studying development in this manner would be through studying molar activities like the Shared Book Experience in their natural environments. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that molar activities are "a cause, context and consequence of psychological growth" (p. 55). From this perspective, development is very dependent on individual circumstances. Because the molar nature of activities according to Bronfenbrenner is determined by the individual's perceptions of what takes place, it would seem very important to listen to how individuals perceive reading in addition to observing what they do, not only on their own, but as they interact with others. This has been a very important aspect of this present study.

When reading is regarded thus, it is possible to see reading development not only as adjustment of the individual to his environment, but also as the individual actively constructing his reality. Thus, it is possible not only to evaluate what the child has learned, but also to have some idea of possible directions for further development; the child's potential development.

Learning to read is rooted in social interaction. The interaction is dynamic, fluid. One is unable to predict what will happen next. This interaction is very dependent upon the particular context. It is very sensitive to the roles and relations of the participants. It is structured by the purposes of the participants and the nature of the text, the particular context. It is enhanced by the participants' prior knowledge and shared experiences. Within the dependent nature of the interaction, there are patterns, usual ways of doing things, that repeat themselves in both expected and unexpected ways. It is possible that in the repetition of these patterns, there is an opportunity for mastery. There was also evidence of spontaneous elements nested within the recursive patterns. It is possible that these spontaneous elements are an indication of the direction for future development.

In interactions with their environment, as Vygotsky (1978) explained, internal developmental processes are awakened. The children internalize this interaction and later are able to re-present what took place in another context in spontaneous ways. Then, this re-presentation is internalized again in a stronger form. At some time in the spiralling relationship between individual and environment, these interactions become independent, automatic behaviors. Possibly at the same time, they could be represented in abstract ways. The zone of proximal development is a fertile ground for research. Studying what takes place as young children read with others in natural contexts should provide clues to its secrets.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study support recent research in early literacy development (Ninio & Bruner, 1977; Doake, 1981, 1986; Goldfield & Snow, 1983, 1984; Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1981; Wells, 1981, 1983, 1985; Brailsford, 1985; Juliebo, 1985). With this present research, the possibility of studying reading from a developmental perspective has moved from preschool literacy development to development once young children begin formal schooling.

This research demonstrates the importance of studying literacy development from an ecological framework where complex relationships among factors may be observed in the natural context. Some directions for further study are presented below:

1. This study was concerned with successful readers. There is a need to study other successful readers as they begin formal schooling, but there is also a need to learn more about those who are less able. One could then determine if patterns noted in this study are similar or different.
2. This study took place in a classroom whose teacher espoused a whole language philosophy of teaching beginning reading where Shared Book Experiences

were an integral part of the program. It would be important to study the ecological transition to grade one when the Shared Book Experience is not an integral part of the school reading program and where other philosophies are espoused.

3. In this study, cognitive confusion occurred for Brenda when she began relating her memorized reading to sound/symbol relationships in the print. It would be of value to study where young children's cognitive confusions occur in programs using a variety of instructional methods.
4. In this study, it seemed that a nesting of recursive and spontaneous elements at different levels contributed to the three children's development in literacy. There is a need to further study the manner in which recursive and spontaneous aspects at many levels contribute to young children's literacy development.
5. In this study, the main body of data collection took place during one week. It would be important to extend this study to include young children's development through the primary grades to record factors which influence development over a more extended period of time.
6. It would be extremely valuable to study conversation patterns of beginning readers and

adults as they read together in the home and in the school. It was found that a great deal of information about how young children were becoming independent readers could be gleaned through studying their verbal interactions during Shared Book Experiences, together with their perceptions about the nature of reading, if the conversation was studied from the perspective of the dyadic unit.

There are different perspectives from which a researcher can view the dialectic. If one regards the Shared Book Experience from all these different perspectives, one gains a clearer understanding of what takes place than if one had regarded the interaction from only one perspective. As the data analysis in this present study progressed, a coding system was developed which seems to capture these different perspectives. Moreover, because it was found that coding recursive patterns could mask spontaneous elements, great care was taken during the analysis to consider the possibility of a nesting of the two elements. Although the coding system is still in its formative stages, it will be described below.

Verbal interactions were regarded from three perspectives: (a) patterns of interactions between adult and child, (b) the point of view of the child or the adult, and (c) the content of the interaction. Within these perspectives, categories of interactions were noted.

One way in which the verbal interactions during Shared Book Experiences were coded was from the perspective of the intersubjective interaction; the give-and-take or turn-taking nature of conversation. The researcher had to distance herself from the interaction to regard the dyad as a working unit. Studying intersubjective interaction enabled the researcher to identify shifts in the balance of power. Two patterns of interaction were noted. The first category was more directive in nature. The teacher's or parent's comments, or sometimes the child's seemed to be intended to provide the partner with information the participant already had; to direct or to evaluate the partner's understandings. The other category of interaction was more exploratory in nature. In an exploratory pattern, utterances tended to build one on the other for an extended period of time; insights from both partners adding to a richer whole. This category of interaction was symbiotic in nature; there was a sharing of insights. Gadamer (as cited in Ricoeur, 1976) called this phenomenon a "fusion of worlds."

Both types of patterns tended to take place within the same reading event. Sometimes the more directive pattern seemed to act as a foundation from which the exploratory pattern evolved. It is interesting to note that on the whole, both patterns were contingent or built upon the previous utterance. The role of these patterns could not be clearly understood until the verbal interaction was viewed from both the child and the adult's perspective.

The second perspective from which to view verbal interactions during Shared Book Experiences, involved an explanation of the conversation from the participants' perspectives. The researcher moved closer to the interaction and attempted to adopt first the perspective of the child and second the perspective of the adult. The child's perspective was the most difficult to grasp. It was very hard to divorce oneself from one's role as teacher, parent, researcher and to try to see again as a child. Talking with the children and observing them in the classroom facilitated this process. The researcher asked herself the questions, "How is the child seeing the interaction?" and "How is the adult seeing the interaction?" The coding system in this section used a continuum from where one partner was in control, to a sharing of power, to where the partner allowed the other to assume control. Four categories were used to describe what took place from this perspective: accountable, symbiotic, support, and autonomy. In accountable interactions, the intent of the utterance was directive in nature. Symbiotic utterances were exploratory. Utterances were coded as support when the intent was to accept or reinforce or acknowledge what the other had said. Autonomous utterances, like reading text without interruption from the other could almost have taken place independently, without the presence of the other. Preliminary analysis led me to believe that support was provided and withdrawn as the child required - a zone of proximal development phenomenon.

The third way of viewing the dialectic was by focusing on the content rather than on the structure of the verbal interaction. The researcher distanced herself from the interaction again, but this time the focus was on the content of the interaction, on what reading processes were being discussed at particular points in the reading event. One type of reading interaction was concerned with mastery of the words. As a result, interactions tended to focus on data-driven processing. Another type of interaction involved an abstraction or disembedding from the text. Here, interactions tended to focus on conceptually-driven processing. A third category of interaction was more interactive. It involved orchestrating both data-driven and conceptually driven processes.

In addition to these three categories of interactions, there were two levels of discussion which took place. Participants talked about the text either at a cognitive level, for example, "It's not very pleasant to be muddy all over," or at a metacognitive level, for example, "Jule Ann was all muddy again. This is the second time. Do you remember what she did after she was muddy the first time?" The metacognitive level involved further distancing from the text and a more conscious awareness.

From all three perspectives, the coding system was very neutral, that is, the terms could apply to either child or adult. It was found that when one entertained the possibility that the child could be teacher and the adult could be learner, there was less potential for skewing the results by assuming that the teacher or parent was in control. The categories used for analysis thus enabled the researcher to explore the conversation from a variety of perspectives without assigning the adult and child roles a priori. Therefore, there was a greater possibility that one could come closer to what was actually taking place.

In this coding system, it was possible to study both spontaneous comments and recursive patterns. It was possible to study how the scaffolding was taking place as the participants revisited aspects of the text in different ways at different times. There was evidence that the children were internalizing reading processes and at the same time were growing in their ability to talk about the text on a metacognitive level. This coding system could be used to learn more about beginning reading in natural contexts like the Shared Book Experience. Through such studies one could learn more about the zone of proximal development. And so the end of this thesis is but another beginning.

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APPENDIX A

Classroom Floor Plan

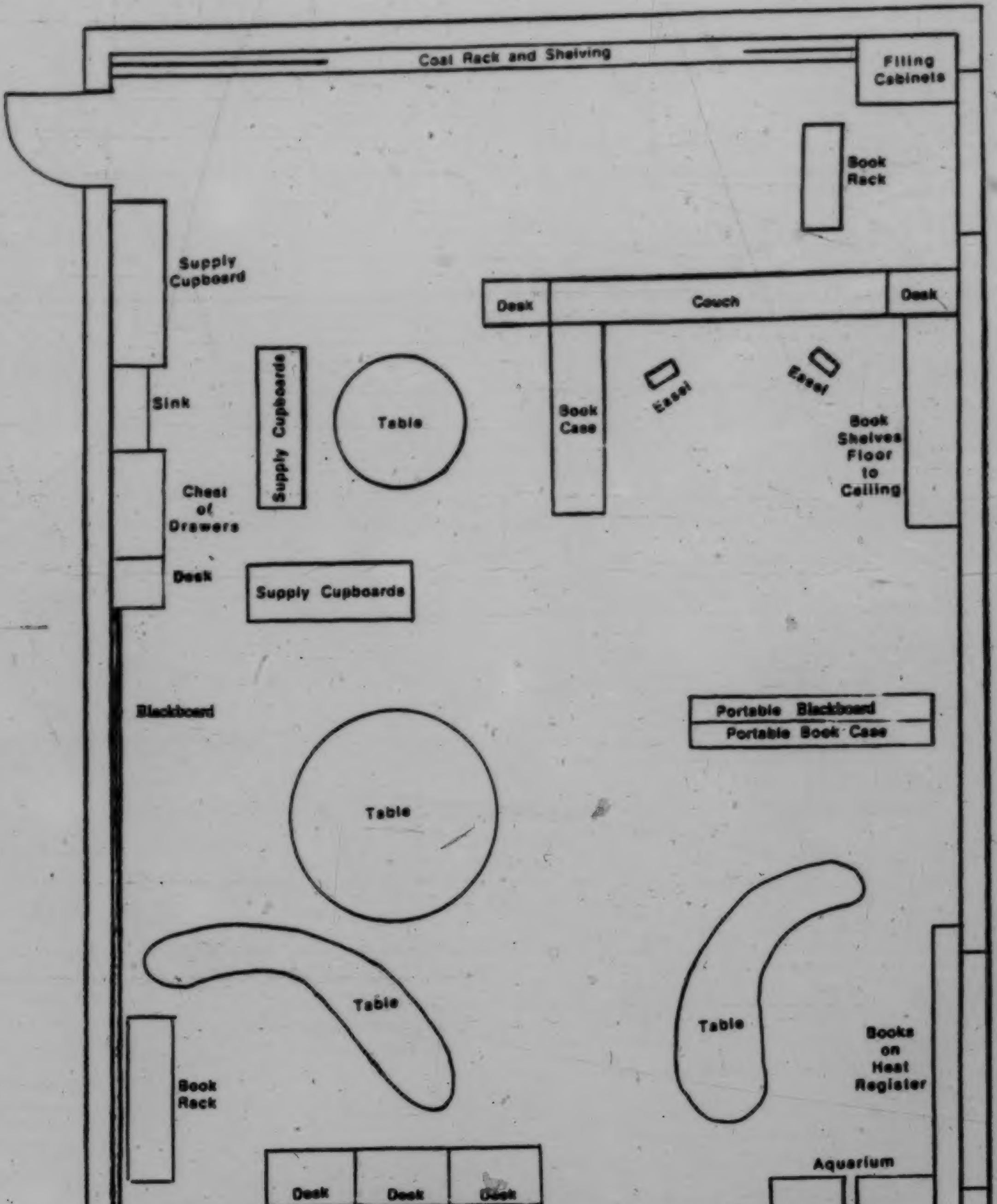
Coat Rack and Shelving
Filing Cabinets
Book Rack
Supply Cupboard
Desk
Couch
Desk
Supply Cupboards
Table
Sink
Book Case
Easel
Easel
Book Shelves Floor to Ceiling
Chest of Drawers
Desk
Supply Cupboards
Blackboard
Portable Blackboard
Portable Book Case
Table
Table
Table
Book Rack
Books on Heat Register
Aquarium
Desk
Desk
Desk
Desk
Blackboard

Figure 1. Classroom Floor Plan

APPENDIX B

Questionnaires and Diary

CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW A

1. HOW READING FITS INTO ONE'S LIFE

After school or on a Saturday, what do you like to do?
Do you and your mom spend time together?
What do you do?

Other possible questions: What would you rather do? Would you rather read something or watch TV? Are there somethings you like about TV? Dislike? What are they? Do you read anything on TV?

2. SELF READING AND DEVELOPMENT

Can you read all by yourself?
When did you learn to read?
How do you think you learned?
Is anyone helping you learn to read? Who?

3. AFFECT

Are there some things that you like about reading?

What are they?

4. AFFECT

Are there some things that you don't like about reading? What are they?

5. SELF ASSESSMENT

Is reading a hard thing for you to do?

6. SELF ASSESSMENT

How good a reader would you say you are?
Why do you think so?

7. READING MODELS

Do you see mom, dad, brothers, sisters reading at home?

Other possible questions: How many times do you think they read? Why do they read? Do you like them to read? What reasons do you think he/she/they have for reading?

8. SELF READING: TIME AND MATERIALS

At home, do you read by yourself?
Do you read without anyone telling you to read?

Other possible questions: How many times a day? What do you read? When do you read? How long do you read?

9. SELF READING: TIME AND MATERIALS

When you're at school, do you read by yourself?
At school, do you read by yourself without anyone telling you to read?

Other possible questions: How many times a day? What do you read? When do you read? How long do you read?

10: VALUE OF READING

Do you think reading is important? Why?

11. DEFINITION OF A GOOD READER

What things does a kid have to do to be a good reader?
What things does a kid have to learn to be a good reader?

12: DEVELOPMENT

When does a person become a really good reader?

13. DEVELOPMENT

When a kid in grade one is reading, is he doing the same thing as when a kid in grade six is reading? Why?

14. DEVELOPMENT

Are all people who are adults really good readers? Why?

15. CAUSES OF READING DIFFICULTY

Why do you think that some children have trouble reading?

A. ROLE OF THE HOME

Can moms or dads help these children?
What can they do?

B. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

Can teachers help these children?
What can they do?

16. DEVELOPMENT

What things do you need to do to be a better reader than you are right now?

17. DEFINITION OF READING

(Using a stuffed animal, doll or puppet that the child owns, tell the child we're going to do some pretending)

Let's pretend (toy's name) mommy told him he was going to learn to read. But he doesn't know anything about reading. What's reading? He needs some help. Could you tell him what reading is?

PARENT/TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW A

1. HOW READING FITS INTO ONE'S LIFE

   How do you spend your leisure time?

   Parent only: Do you and your child spend leisure time together? What do you do?

   Other possible questions: What do you do? What would you rather do? Would you rather read or watch TV? Are there some things that you like/dislike about TV?

2. AFFECT

   Are there some things that you like about reading? What are they?

3. AFFECT

   Are there some things that you don't like about reading? What are they?

4. SELF ASSESSMENT

   Is reading a hard thing for you to do? Why?

5. SELF ASSESSMENT

   How good a reader would you say you are? Excellent, above average, below average, very low? Why do you think so?

6. READING MODELS

   Do others in your family read?

   Other possible questions: Who are they? How often do you think they read? How long do they read at one time? What reasons do think he/she/they have for reading?

7. SELF READING: TIME AND MATERIALS

   Do you read at home?

   Other possibe questions: How often? When do you read? What do you read? How long do you read?

   Teacher only: Do you read at school?

8. VALUE OF READING

   Do you think reading is important? Why?

9. DEFINITION OF A GOOD READER

   What things does a person have to do to be a good reader? What things does a person have to learn to be a good reader?

10. DEVELOPMENT

    When does a person become a really good reader?

11. DEVELOPMENT
    When a child in grade one is reading, is he doing the same things as when an adult is reading? Why?

12. DEVELOPMENT
    Are all people who are adults really good readers? Why do you think so?

13. CAUSES OF READING DIFFICULTY
    Why do you think that some children have trouble reading?
    A. ROLE OF THE HOME
        What can the home do about it?
    B. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL
        What can the school do about it?

14. DEVELOPMENT
    What things do you need to do to be a better reader than you are right now?

15. DEVELOPMENT
    When did you learn to read?
    How do you think you learned?
    Who was most influential in helping you learn to read?

16. DEFINITION OF READING
    Many people think reading is one of the most important things you do in school. What do you say reading is?

CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW B

PART ONE

A HOW READING FITS INTO THE INTERACTION

When you're with your teacher/parent, what kinds of things do you do?

B MATERIALS

i. HOME

What kinds of things do you like to play with at home?
What do you like to read?
What do you like to write with?

ii. SCHOOL

What kinds of things do you like to play with at school?
What do you like to read?
What do you like to write with?

C. ADULT ROLE: PROVIDING MATERIALS

i. HOME

Tell me about the books that you can use at home.

Other possible questions: How many books? What kinds of books? Do you go to the library? How often? Do you go to the bookstore? How often? Who picks out the books?

ii. SCHOOL

Tell me about the books that you can use at school.

Other possible questions: How many books? What kinds of books? Do you go to the library at school? How often? Who picks out the books?

D. PARENT ROLE: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Does your mom come into the school to help?

Other possible questions: What does she do? Would you like her to do anything else?

E. ASSESSMENT: CHILD'S READING PROGRESS

Are you a better reader than you were when you started grade one?
Why do you think that?

PART TWO: HOME/SCHOOL SHARED BOOK EXPERIENCES

ACT OUT A STORY SESSION IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT. USE THE FOLLOWING PROBES AS REQUIRED:

I. TIME
When do you read books with your parent/teacher?
How long do you read?

II. PLACE
Where do you read?

III. BASIS OF SELECTION
How are the books chosen?

IV. ROLES
Once a book is chosen, who holds the book?
How is the book held?

V. CHILD'S VISUAL FOCUS
Where do you look when your parent/teacher is reading?

VI. INTERACTION
What do you do or say?
What does your parent/teacher do/say?

VII. INTERACTION: TRACKING
Does your parent/teacher help you follow along in some way? What does she do?

VIII. INTERACTION: METHOD
Do you do the same things every time you read this book with your parent/teacher?
What if you had a different book, would you do the same things?

IX. BENEFIT
Why do you think you read with your parent/teacher at home/school?

X. CHILD REACTION
How do you feel about the story sessions with your parent/teacher?

XI. PARENT/TEACHER REACTION
How do you think your parent/teacher feels about the story sessions?

XII. ECOLOGICAL VALIDITY REPORT
Were the story sessions that were taped in your home/classroom the same or different from what you usually do?

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW B

PART ONE

A HOW READING FITS INTO THE INTERACTION

What kinds of activities do you do with your child?

Other possible questions: How does ---- spend his/her time at home?

B MATERIALS

What kinds of reading and writing materials are available to your child at home?

C ADULT ROLE| PROVIDING MATERIALS AND BOOKS

How are books made available to your child?

Other possible questions: How many books? What kinds of books? How much time is made available to your child for reading? Do you visit the public library? How frequently? Do you visit the bookstore? How frequently? Do you take your child? Who selects the books?

D. READING DEVELOPMENT

When was reading to your child started?

Other possible questions| Why was this particular age chosen? When did your child begin to read on his/her own?

When did your child begin to write?

E. PARENT ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

What is the parent's role in helping the child to read?

Other possible questions: What should the parents be doing?

F. TEACHER ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

What is the teacher's role in helping children learn to read?

Other possible questions: What should the teacher be doing?

G. PARENT ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

Should parents be involved in the school?
How should they be involved?

H. ASSESSMENT: CHILD'S READING PROGRESS

What kinds of information would you like the teacher to give you concerning your child's progress?

Other possible questions: What kind of information would you like to see on the report card? How well do you think your child is progressing at school?

PART TWO: HOME SHARED BOOK EXPERIENCES

I. TIME

When do story sessions usually take place?
How long do the story sessions usually last?

II. PLACE

Where do they usually take place?

III. BASIS OF SELECTION

How are the books chosen?

IV. PROCESS

Once a book is chosen, what do you do?

V. ROLES

Who holds the book? How is the book held?

VI. CHILD'S VISUAL FOCUS

What do the children look at when you are reading together?

VII. INTERACTION:

Do the children join in when you're reading?

VIII. INTERACTION: TRACKING PRINT

Do you help your children follow along with the print in any way?
What do you do?

IX. INTERACTION: METHOD

Are all the books shared in the same way?
Do you read the same book more than once with the children?
Does the way the book is shared change in successive readings?

X. BENEFIT

What do the story sessions do for the children?

XI. CHILD REACTION

How does _____ react to the stories?

XII. PARENT REACTION
How do you feel about the shared stories?

XIII. ECOLOGICAL VALIDITY REPORT
Were the story sessions that were taped the same or different from what you usually do?

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW B

PART ONE

A HOW READING FITS INTO THE INTERACTION

What kinds of language arts activities are common in your classroom?

Other possible questions: How do the story sessions relate to the other activities? How does reading relate to the other language arts activities?

B. MATERIALS

What kinds of reading and writing materials are available to the children in your class?

C. ADULT ROLE: PROVIDING MATERIALS AND BOOKS

How are books made available to the children in your class?

Other possible questions: Do you have a class library? How frequently is the school library visited? How much time is allocated to free reading? What kinds of books are available? How many books? Who chooses the books?

D. READING DEVELOPMENT

When did the children in your class begin to read with you?

Other possible questions: Why did you decide this? When did the children in your class begin to write? Why did you decide this?

E. PARENT ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

What is the parent's role in helping the child to read?

Other possible questions: What should the parents be doing?

F. TEACHER ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

What is the teacher's role in helping children learn to read?

Other possible questions: What should the teacher be doing?

G. PARENT ROLE: CHILD LEARNING TO READ

Should parents be involved in the school?
How should they be involved?

H. ASSESSMENT: CHILD'S READING PROGRESS

How do you assess reading progress in your class?

I. INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

When did -----begin to read on his/her own?
When did -----begin to write on his/her own?
How does -----spend his/her unstructured time in school?
Does -----read voluntarily?
Does -----write voluntarily?

E. ROLE OF PARENTS

What are -----doing at home to help their child read?

PART TWO SCHOOL SHARED BOOK EXPERIENCES

I. TIME

When do story sessions usually take place?
How long do the story sessions usually last?

II. PLACE

Where do they usually take place?

III. BASIS OF SELECTION

How are the books chosen?

IV. PROCESS

Once a book is chosen, what do you do?

V. ROLES

Who holds the book? How is the book held?

VI. CHILD'S VISUAL FOCUS

What do the children look at when you are reading together?

VII. INTERACTION:

Do the children join in when you're reading?

VIII. INTERACTION: TRACKING PRINT

Do you help your children follow along with the print in any way? What do you do?

IX. INTERACTION: METHOD

Are all the books shared in the same way? Do you read the same book more than once with the children? Does the way the book is shared change in successive readings?

X. BENEFIT

What do the story sessions do for the children?

XI. CHILD REACTION

How does _____ react to the stories?

XII. TEACHER REACTION

How do you feel about the shared stories?

XIII. ECOLOGICAL VALIDITY REPORT

Were the story sessions that were taped the same or different from what you usually do?

DIARY FORM

SHARED BOOK EXPERIENCE (HOME/SCHOOL)

Date:____________________

What was happening just before the books were shared?

____

Who was involved in the book sharing?

____

When? Began at _________ Finished at __________

Where?

____

What happened just after the books were shared?

____

Please list the books in the order in which they were read. With each book, note the last time you read the book with your child and how often it has been read.

Author Title

DAILY ACTIVITIES

DATE:______ HOME____ SCHOOL______

The parents and the teacher were asked to record, at half hour intervals, what activities the children, or in the case of the teacher, the class, were involved in during the part of the day that the children were in their care. The half hour intervals were listed in the following manner for the whole day:

7:00-7:30

7:30-8:00

8:00-8:30

8:30-9:00

9:00-9:30

9:30-10:00

10:00-10:30

10:30-11:00